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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

Parliament has been convened to Berne for the Spring session and some momentous matters are to be dealt with.

First and foremost ranks the report of the Federal Council on the "Krisen Initiative," which is the work of M. Schulthess. Whilst it may be termed his swan-song, there is nothing of a dying spirit in it. In fact, the Federal Council is unusually severe in the uncompromising manner in which it recommends the rejection of the proposed measure; that it would lead to such tremendous changes of a socialistic tendency as to seriously jeopardize Swiss economic life with ruinous financial results.

There is a considerable movement on foot, originating from some National Councillors of the canton of St. Gall, urging that, to fight the Initiative with a mere negative is fraught with considerable danger, and that a considered counter-proposal should be put forward by the Government, offering a definite alternative to the utopian demands of the initiative. Nat. Councillor Schirmer submitted such a measure to the National Council's Committee, but M. Schulthess remained adamant. In Parliament itself, Dr. Säker propounded a similar counter-proposal and the latest indications to hand are, that it stands a good chance of being adopted. This would not mean, that M. Säker's proposal would be adopted as it stands, but that the Federal Council would be instructed to draw up such proposal to be submitted to Parliament in the June session. Present intentions are to put the matter before the people on 2nd June; if a counter-proposal is agreed to, voting would have to be postponed to the autumn.

M. SCHULTHESS' SUCCESSOR IN THE FEDERAL COUNCIL.

At the time of writing these notes there is still no definite information available as to the likely successor of M. Schulthess, who for so many years has acquitted himself in such exemplary manner of his formidable task as Chef of the department of public economy. At first a reshuffling in the Federal Council and the respective portfolios was contemplated, then a partial division of the various sections of M. Schulthess' department. Now it seems that the new Federal Councillor will inherit all the worries and troubles of his predecessor. We fear, "das Erbe Schulthess" does not have many attractions. This may be one of the reasons why our French-speaking compatriots do not intend putting forward a candidate, although the seat would be their due, having but one representative in the Federal Council at the moment. Nat. Councillor Lachenal was approached with a view to putting forward his candidature; he declined. On the other hand, the Socialists addressed a letter to the "bourgeois" Parties in Parliament, claiming the vacant seat. There is no likelihood whatever,

that their demand will be acceded to. The Radical-Democrats have not yet put forward a definite candidature, but there is little doubt but that the new Minister will come from their ranks.

SWITZERLAND'S NOTE TO GERMANY.

The Swiss Note to the German Government demanding the release of Berthold Jakob, the German journalist, who, it is claimed, was abducted by Nazis at Basle, has been handed to Baron von Neurath by M. Dinichert, the Swiss Minister in Berlin.

The Note sets forth the circumstances in which Jakob was carried off, emphasises the complicity of German officials, and states that in these circumstances there can be no doubt that Swiss territorial integrity has been violated. The Swiss Government therefore formally calls upon the German Government to hand over Jakob and to take measures against those officials responsible for this breach of international comity.

An appeal to the League of Nations is considered possible in well-informed quarters if diplomatic pressure does not succeed.

TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITH GERMANY.

The recently put up Clearing-house, regulating payments between the two countries, has not come up to expectations, chiefly due to a sensible fall in Imports from Germany. Minister Dr. Stucki has charge of new negotiations; no definite information concerning the result of the discussions is yet available.

A GERMAN COMMUNIST TO BE DEPORTED.

The Federal Council has refused Germany's demand of extradition of Heinz Neumann, for the reason that Neumann, in their opinion, was to be prosecuted for political delinquencies.

As Neumann has been residing in Zurich with false passport and without permission, and in view of his communist activities, the Federal Council has decided to deport him.

The N. Z. comments: "It is gratifying that the Federal Council, independent from political considerations, and solely from the standpoint of law and justice arrived at his decision. Neumann not to be delivered up to Germany. Equally gratifying is it, that the communist Neumann is to be deported. Switzerland's needs in Moscowites is fully covered."

NEW TREATY WITH FINLAND.

A new treaty concerning the settling of Swiss citizens in Finland has been approved and M. Motta has been authorized to sign in the name of the Federal Council.

MARCEL JACQUIER IN HYERES ARRESTED.

Jacquier, the cause of so much trouble in that Nicole-Fonjallaz affair, has been arrested by the French police in Hyères. His extradition will be applied for without delay.

It appears that Jacquier travelled from Annecy to Marseilles with a free pass, which he obtained by pretending that he wanted to enlist in the Foreign Legion. From Marseilles he went to Hyères where he met his fate.

His arrest may have interesting consequences. "La Suisse" publishes a statement of M. Guinand, Colonel Fonjallaz's lawyer, foreshadowing an action against State Councillor Nicole and the journalist Sarrol of the "Travail," accusing them of making use of falsifications and forgeries, as supplied by Jacquier.

SWISS EXPORT BANK.

At the last meeting of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce discussion took place on the formation of a special bank to finance exports. A detailed plan will be put before the Federal Government shortly.

BOY KING'S AUDIENCE.

The nine-year-old King of Siam received M. de Stouz, permanent head of the Swiss Foreign Office, who presented the respects of his country.

SWISS REFERENDUM.

The attempt of the Swiss Labour Front to apply the principles of the "New Deal" to Switzerland, by initiating, on June 2nd, a referendum on a large scale programme of public works, has encountered strong opposition in Parliament.

After three days of debate, the Swiss Chamber decided by 108 votes to 54 to ask the people to reject this referendum.

The referendum proposal will next be discussed by the Upper House.

FEDERAL BANKING COMMISSION.

The Federal Council has nominated the following Gentlemen as members of the Banking Commission: President: M. Schulthess, late Federal Councillor; Vice-President: M. Paul Rossi, Manager of the National Bank in Berne; Members: M. Karl Brüderlin, late Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation; M. E. Walch, late Bank Manager in Chardonne-sur-Vevey and M. Zust, States Councillor in Lucerne.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

M. Arthur Hantzsch, Professor of Chemistry at the Federal Technical High School in Zurich, from 1885-1890, has died, aged 79.

M. Robert Thomann of the editorial staff of the N. Z. Z. since 1916 has resigned. Originally a teacher, it was but natural that he should chiefly devote himself in his editorial capacity to questions of education. He also took an active part in politics, presiding in 1927/28 over the Town Council. We are sure his pen will remain active in his retirement.

THURGAU.

In Kreuzlingen died suddenly, Colonel Paul Albert Lardy, retired officer of the Instruction-corps (Artillery).

TICINO.

The fascists of the canton have split into two parties, one under the leadership of Alberto Rossi, the other under Pietro Scanziani. The latter is editing a new paper, called "A noi" and which has received the official sanction of Colonel Fonjallaz, according it the title of "Official organ of the Swiss fascist party."

AARGAU.

In Birrhard a conflagration destroyed the residence together with barn and stables of the farmer Adolf Haller. The cattle and horses were saved. All other contents to the value of 40,000 Sw. Frs. were consumed by the flames. The origin of the fire is unknown, but carelessness on the part of a member of the staff is suspected.

BERNE.

M. Joseph Périnat, President for over 50 years of the Tribunal at Moutier has celebrated his 90th birthday anniversary. M. Périnat is a director of the Cantonal Bank in Moutier.

APPENZELL J. Rh.

The death is reported from Appenzell of M. B. Enzler, late "Landeshauptmann" at the age of 73; the deceased was from 1897-1907 a member of the cantonal government.

NEUCHATEL.

The accounts of the canton of Neuchâtel for 1934 show a deficit of 4,934,243 frs. An amount of 3,700,731 frs. was spent during 1934 for unemployment relief.

BASLE.

Dr. Alfred Sarasin, senior-partner of the well-known Banking firm of A. Sarasin and Co., in Basle, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. Dr. Sarasin was from 1927-1934 President of the Swiss National Bank, he enjoys a great reputation in Swiss Banking Circles, in 1927 he was made a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Basle.

* * *

Dr. Karl Schwarber, has been appointed head of the University Library in Basle in succession to Professor Binz who recently relinquished his post.