

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1935)

**Heft:** 703

**Rubrik:** Home news

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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 9595.

Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 14—No. 703

LONDON, APRIL 13, 1935.

PRICE 3d.

## MITTELHOLZER LECTURE

Monday, 15th at

KING GEORGE'S HALL (8 o'clock).

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### HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

#### FEDERAL.

##### NEW FEDERAL COUNCILLOR.

M. Hermann Obrecht, a former National-Councillor, has been elected a member of the Federal Government in succession to Dr. Schulthess, who has recently resigned from his post.

The new Federal-Councillor was born at Grenchen (Ct. Solothurn) in 1882, the son of a watch manufacturer; he started his career as a teacher in Welschenrohr. In 1902, he entered into the service of the canton of Solothurn as secretary of the Finance Dept. During that time, he prepared himself for an examination as a solicitor, and in 1907 he took over the editorship of the newly founded "Solothurner Zeitung." Two years later, he entered the cantonal government, where he acted as head of the Finance and Military Departments; in 1917 he left the government voluntarily, and established himself as an advocate at Solothurn; in the same year he was elected a member of Parliament, (National-Council) as well as a member of the "Kantonsrat." M. Obrecht resigned his seat in Parliament in 1928, and five years later he left the "Kantonsrat" in order to devote his time to his professional duties. Until recently Federal-Councillor Obrecht was President of the Board of the "Solothurner Kantonal Bank." In the Army he reached the rank of a colonel of infantry in which capacity he commanded a division during the 1934 manoeuvres.

M. Obrecht has rendered great services to his native canton, and to the Confederation, and we are joining the Swiss Press in wishing him great success in his new and responsible office. (M. Obrecht is the 3rd Federal-Councillor hailing from the canton of Solothurn, the two previous ones were J. Munzinger and Bernhard Hammer).

##### THE ABDUCTION OF HERR JAKOB.

The Swiss Government's Note to the German Government on the subject of the abduction across the frontier of Herr Berthold Jakob on March 9th last is much praised in Swiss and international circles.

In particular M. Motta's action is approved in taking his stand on the basic question of the violation of Swiss sovereignty and eschewing all legal quibbles.

That Herr Jakob was abducted by force there can remain not a shadow of a doubt. The Swiss memorandum of April 1st sets out with irrefutable precision all the ramifications of the plot between Wesemann and Captain Hans Manz (a man high in favour with the Führer, who played a part in the massacres of June 30th) to lure Herr Jakob over the German frontier. The German story simply will not hold water, and the Federal Government possesses all the evidence necessary for its complete refutation.

On all sides and by almost all shades of opinion throughout Switzerland the Federal Government's action has been applauded. The

jurists commend M. Motta for his strict adherence to the letter of international law.

The International Association of journalists Accredited to the League of Nations has sent M. Motta a telegram of congratulation.

At the time of writing no German reply to the Swiss Note has been received in Berne.

##### "AGENTS PROVOCATEURS" IN SWITZERLAND.

As a consequence of the recent kidnapping at Basle of the German-Jewish journalist Herr Jakob, M. Baumann, chief of the Federal Department of Justice and Police, has drafted a Bill with the object of suppressing espionage and the activities of foreign agents provocateurs in Switzerland. The Government have approved of the Bill in principle, and it is expected to come into force at the end of May.

##### DEFENCE OF SWISS FRANC.

The devaluation of the belga was followed, as had been expected, by big withdrawals of funds from Switzerland and by an attack on the Swiss franc. The new chief of the Federal Department of Public Economy, M. Obrecht, and the directors of the Swiss National Bank have stated emphatically that there is no question of abandoning the gold standard.

According to the figures issued, the gold reserve of the Swiss National Bank in the week ending on April 6th decreased by 119,000,000f., but at the same time the banknote circulation was reduced by 32,500,000f. The gold was used for paying Swiss debts abroad, mostly for goods. On April 6th the gold reserve stood at roughly 1,600,000,000f., and the banknote circulation was 1,325,000,000f.

##### SWISS FEDERAL LOAN.

The Swiss Government has now made an arrangement with Swiss banks for the issue of a 3 per cent. loan of 100 million francs on behalf of the Federal Railways. The rate of issue will be 93.65 per cent. in addition to 0.6 per cent. for stamp duty. This loan will mature in 1960, but is redeemable by draw in 25 annuities. It is to serve for the partial conversion and redemption of the 5 per cent. Fourth Electrification Loan of 150 millions of the year 1924 and of the 5 per cent. Sixth Electrification Loan of 50 millions, of the year 1925.

##### LOCAL.

###### BERNE.

Minister Stucki, head of the Commercial Dept. of the Federal Dept. of Public Economy, has informed the Federal Council, that he wishes to be relieved of his post at the end of the current year.

\* \* \*

Lieutenant Marcel Berger, a pilot belonging to the Swiss Flying corps was killed when making a forced landing at the Aerodrome at Thoune.

###### BASLE.

In Basle, died at the age of 83, M. Victor Stein, who was, until 1920, General-Manager of the Insurance Company "Bâloise."

\* \* \*

The Socialists have gained a majority in the elections for the government of the canton of Basle. The following having been elected: G. Wenk (Socialist); Dr. F. Hauser (Socialist); Brechbühl (Socialist); Ebli (Socialist); Dr. E. Zweifel (Radical); Imhof (Liberal); Ludwig (Liberal); Niederhäuser (Catholic-Popular Party), who was a member of the cantonal government for the last 16 years, was defeated.

###### ST. GALLEN.

M. Johann Müller (Christian-Socialist) has been elected a member of Parliament (Nat. Council) in succession to the late Dr. Geser-Rohner. M. Müller was born in 1883 at Bütschwil, since 1924 he has been a member of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall.

The death has occurred at Rebstein (St. Gall) of Dr. Albert Geser-Rohner at the age of 67. The deceased was born in 1868 in Gossau, he studied law at the Universities of Innsbruck, Freiburg, Lille and Zurich. From 1909-1924 Dr. Geser was a member of the Grand Council. For twenty-five years, he occupied a leading position in the Embroidery firm J. Rohner, A.G. He entered Parliament in 1933.

###### NEUCHATEL.

Colonel Paul Lardy, a member of the Federal Instruction Corps from 1896-1918, has died at the age of 74.

###### SOLOTHURN.

M. Obrecht, the newly elected Federal-Councillor, received a great reception in Solothurn on his return from Berne. Dr. Haefelin, head of the cantonal government welcomed the new Magistrate on his arrival at the station. A procession numbering over 2,000 people was formed, which moved amidst the ringing of bells, and the firing of guns to the "Restaurant Schützenmatt," where a reception took place. Federal-Councillor Obrecht in a speech, which was often interrupted by applause, thanked the population for the hearty welcome which they extended to him, and assured them that he will faithfully and untiringly work for the good of his country.

###### ZURICH.

The election for the cantonal government have resulted in a victory for the bourgeois parties, the following members have been elected: Dr. Briner (Democrat: 68,193); Dr. Hafner (Liberal: 68,180); Rud. Maurer (Bourgeois: 68,031); R. Streuli (Bourgeois: 67,935); H. Streuli, (Liberal: 66,666); O. Pfister (Socialist: 50,287); E. Nobs (Socialist: 47,249).

###### GRISONS.

The death is reported from Maienfeld of Dr. Karl Turban, founder of the "Parksanatorium" at Davos.

## MITTELHOLZER LECTURE.

We wish to direct again the attention of our readers to the lecture of our famous countryman Walter Mittelholzer, who will speak on his epoch making flights to Spitzbergen, Persia and Africa. This lecture will be illustrated with lantern slides.

M. Mittelholzer is one of Switzerland's foremost airmen, who has during the last 20 years crossed the Alps a hundred times in all varieties of weather and under all conditions.

We expect that Mr. Mittelholzer will find a full house at St. George's Hall on Monday next.

It is advisable to be early, as a considerable number of visitors are expected. No entrance fee will be charged, it will be a matter of "first come, first served." A limited number of tickets have been issued principally for the members of the English Press and Tourist Agencies.

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