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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

### FEDERAL.

#### SWISS 1937 BUDGET.

The Swiss Budget for 1937 shows a deficit. Revenue is expected to amount to Frs. 483,400,000 (Fr. 24,300,000 less than for 1936), and expenditure to Frs. 525,900,000 (Fr. 18,500,000 higher), so that there is a short fall of Frs. 42,500,000 (about £2,000,000). The realised deficit was Frs. 79,000,000.

Customs duties are estimated at Frs. 198,000,000, against Frs. 214,000,000.

The duties have been cut to avoid a rise in the cost of living. Interest and amortisation on State loans require Frs. 129,000,000, or Frs. 10,000,000 more than in the Budget of 1936.

#### GENEVA CANTONAL ELECTIONS.

The general election in the canton of Geneva has resulted in a victory for a coalition of the bourgeois parties, who have increased their majority in the Grand Conseil, the cantonal Parliament, from 10 to 20. The Socialists have lost five seats and the Catholics one. The Radicals have gained four seats, and the Conservatives and the Fascists one each.

The election was on the system of P.R. and these results are provisional, but they seem unlikely to be altered. The poll was a very heavy one — about 91 per cent. of the electorate. The composition of the new Cantonal Parliament is as follows:—

Socialists .....	40
Radicals .....	23
Conservatives .....	15
Catholics .....	12
Fascists .....	10

During the last three years there has been, a Socialist majority of the Executive of the Government which has met with great difficulties in consequence of the fact that it had not a majority in the Parliament. It seems likely that in the election of the Executive Government three weeks hence the bourgeois parties will recover their majority.

#### SWISS DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE IN LISBON.

The Federal Council has decided to open a diplomatic Chancery at Lisbon, which will be under the direction of a "chargé d'affaires," *ad interim*.

Monsieur Arthur Redard, at present Counsellor of Legation at Rio de Janeiro, has been appointed to the post of "chargé d'affaires."

The Swiss Minister at Madrid was hitherto also accredited to the Republic of Portugal.

#### FOURTH SWISS LANGUAGE.

Switzerland may soon have a fourth official language. At the last session of the Swiss Parliament a Deputy of the Engadine asked the Government whether they were willing to accept the proposal to add Romansh to the other three, and was told that the Government were examining whether it was possible to do so without amending the Constitution. This rewards the persistent efforts of one of the most interesting linguistic minorities in the country.

The Constitution admits as official languages German, French, and Italian. In 1930 German (Swiss dialect) was spoken by 2,924,000 persons, French by 831,000, and Italian by 242,000. In Parliament the Deputies speak in their own language, but diversity of tongues has never been an obstacle to the growth of democracy.

Romansh is an offshoot of Latin, but it has more links with the Gallo-Roman dialects than with Italian. It is spoken in the greater part of the Engadine, in the Oberhalbstein and Grisons Oberland districts, as well as in Austrian Tirol. In the course of the centuries it has been attacked by Italian on the south and by German on the

north, and lost much ground. The Cantonal Government of the Grisons (Graubünden), which is at Chur, where German is spoken, made no effort to defend Romansh, and its existence was at one time seriously menaced. Some patriots, however, founded the Lia Romanscha, a league for the protection of Romansh, and thanks to its unceasing efforts the language was saved and even developed. The league is collecting ancient and modern documents and literary works, editing several newspapers, publishing school books and grammars, and defending Romansh against all encroachments.

Romansh is now being taught in the schools, and official documents are issued in it. In the Engadine road signs are generally written in Romansh, and in the villages the Stadthaus, or town hall, is now called Chesa Comunela, and the school bears the local name of Semela Comunela, while the people greet each other with a "Dien s'allega!" which means "God make you happy!" The number of those speaking Romansh has risen from 36,700 in 1880 to 46,000 in 1935.

If the Government comply with the wish expressed by the Romansh-speaking minority Romansh will become the principal instead of the secondary language in the schools in its own territory, and its use will be permitted in Parliament.

#### INTERNATIONAL BANK AND DEVALUATION.

The Administrative Council of the Bank for International Settlements met at Basle, following a conference of central bank governors. Mr. Montagu Norman represented Great Britain and the others present were Dr. Schacht (Germany), M. Labeyrie (France), and Dr. Bachmann (Switzerland).

A decrease in the balance directly due to monetary devaluation in several countries was announced.

The balance at the end of August was 672,433,982 Swiss francs (about £32,020,000), but at the end of October it had fallen to 602,800,000 Swiss francs (about £28,705,000).

The position of the British director of the Bank for International Settlements will be filled soon by the appointment of one of the directors of the Bank of England.

#### NEW RUMANIAN MINISTER IN SWITZERLAND.

Dr. Constantin Antoniade has been appointed Rumanian Minister in Berne, in succession to Monsieur B. Boeresco; Monsieur Antoniade has been until now a permanent delegate at the League of Nations.

#### DIVORCE IN SWITZERLAND.

In 1935 the number of divorces amounted to 3,015; in 1886 there were 882, in 1910—1,527, and in 1930—2,723.

#### RED CROSS.

Lieutenant-Colonel, Dr. E. Denzler from Zurich, has been appointed surgeon-in-chief of the Swiss Red Cross, in succession to Colonel Hans Sutter from St. Gall.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

Dr. W. Schaufelberger, senior-partner of the "Sofis-Apparatefabrik" has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary; he was for many years a lecturer at the Federal technical University in Zurich. Dr. Schaufelberger was for fifteen years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Zurich.

\* \* \*

In Zurich died at the age of 73, Mme. Petrowitsch, the sister of ex Queen of Servia, Draga Maschin, who was murdered at Belgrade in 1903. Mme. Petrowitsch lived at Zurich for many years.

#### THE EVENT OF THE COLONY

#### CITY SWISS CLUB.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27th

for the

#### ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL

at the

Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W.1.

Admission by ticket only, obtainable from  
Members of the Committee.

#### BERNE.

Over 15,000 litres of petrol and oil were destroyed during a fire which broke out at the premises of the firm Bärtschi, Petrol and Oil merchants at Bienna. The damage caused is supposed to be considerable.

\* \* \*

The death is reported from Berne, of Mme. Emma Müller-Vogt, the widow of the late Federal Councillor Müller, at the age of 83.

#### FRIBOURG.

Abbé Nicolas Wewrich, for thirty years, chancellor of the University of Fribourg, has died at the age of 65.

#### BASLE.

Pastor D. Hans Baur, preacher at the St. Leonhard church in Basle has celebrated his 25th Jubilee.

#### SCHAFFHAUSEN.

M. Walter Bringolf (Socialist) has been re-elected, President of the town of Schaffhausen.

#### ST. GALLEN.

M. Schmuki "Bezirksmann" in Uznach has been elected a member of the States Council (Ständerat).

#### GRISONS.

A large fire destroyed several houses at the village Morissau (on the foot of Piz Mundau.) The damage caused is estimated to be between 50 and 60,000 frs.

#### AARAU.

Five people were seriously injured when a motor-car collided with a lorry at the "Wilerloch-Kurve" near Turgi.

\* \* \*

The firm of Wartmann and Cie, in Brugg has been commissioned with the erection of the Swiss pavilion for the International Exhibition which will take place in Paris next year.

#### VAUD.

Doctor Charles Perret, a surgeon practising at Clarens, has been appointed Professor of medicine at the University of Lausanne.

#### VALAIS.

The death has occurred at St. Maurice of Lieutenant-colonel Long, administrator of the Fortress of Dally near St. Maurice, at the age of 55.

\* \* \*

Dr. Escher, head of the Finance Dept. of the canton of Valais has been elected a National Councillor, this necessitates his resignation from the cantonal government.

\* \* \*

Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Juillard, from Sion, the builder of the Rhone Grand canal has died, he was for many years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Valais.

#### GENEVA.

Mme Marianne Cusinary has celebrated her 100th birthday at Geneva.

#### LA POLITIQUE.

Contre les menées communistes.

Les mesures prises mardi par le Conseil fédéral au sujet du communisme valent mieux que rien, évidemment. Telle est la longanimité — pour ne pas dire la faiblesse — à laquelle les autorités supérieures du pays nous ont accoutumés, envers les groupements révolutionnaires, que la moindre réaction défensive doit être accueillie avec satisfaction.

Nous ne saurons cependant nous déclarer contents de la décision qui vise le "Secours rouge." Cette sentinelle de propagande mosquetaire devait être purement et simplement supprimée, sur tout le territoire helvétique. Son rôle funeste, et même nettement délictueux, est prouvé par l'affaire de Zurich. Il est établi que cette prétendue œuvre humanitaire sert de paravent à la pénétration systématique de la IIIme Internationale; l'on y fabrique de faux passeports, l'on y ourdit toute sorte d'intrigues et de machinations des plus suspectes. Il fallait couper court énergiquement à son activité. Au lieu de cela, on place le "Secours rouge" sous contrôle, on lui défend de s'occuper de politique... Autant exiger d'un nègre qu'il devienne blanc. Le "Secours rouge" persévéra, en prenant des précautions supplémentaires. On le menaçait, d'interdiction, pour le cas où il n'obéirait pas aux ordres qui lui sont donnés. Mais du moment que son rôle est bien défini, à quoi bon attendre des faits nouveaux?