

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: - (1938)

Heft: 881

Artikel: Communicated by the Swiss Legation

Autor: [s.n]

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-695135>

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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 2321/2.

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

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON

VOL. 15—No. 881

LONDON, 1 OCTOBER, 1938

PRICE 3d.

Communicated by the Swiss Legation.

According to the Federal Council's decisions of November 9th, 1928, and September 23rd, 1938, all officers, non-commissioned officers, lance corporals (Gefreite, Appointés, Appuntati) and privates incorporated in the army, and belonging to the "Auszug, Landwehr and Landsturm"; (Elite, Landwehr and Landsturm) (Attiva, Landwehr e Landsturm) have to join their units in case of a general mobilisation.

They will all receive an "ordre de marche" and the necessary instructions from the Legation.

All those who are not affected by the above decisions are not required to join, and will, if necessary, receive special orders.

On receipt of the "ordre de marche," those who have facilities or opportunities to travel, should leave immediately, for the others special arrangements will be made by the Legation.

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HOME NEWS

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

FEDERAL.

CONTROL OF SWISS METAL EXPORTS.

The Swiss Federal Government have decided that the present unsettled international situation makes it necessary to submit the export of all metals and scrap metals to control by special licences. The object of the measure, which is only provisional, is to assure Switzerland the necessary quantity of metal for her industries and to prevent speculation on metal exports.

ANGLO-SWISS TRADE.

A Swiss delegation consisting of MM. Keller, Homburger and Koch has arrived in London to participate in the Anglo-Swiss trade talks.

A delegation first arrived in this country in November last year to negotiate an Anglo-Swiss trade agreement, but the negotiations have been suspended for some time. The present commercial treaty was made so far back as 1855.

BLACK-OUT OF ALL SWITZERLAND.

The first black-out throughout Switzerland, for which exercises and rehearsals had been going on in the various cantons and towns all this year, were held last Tuesday night.

Pedestrians who had to go out that night were supplied by the air raid precaution authorities with luminous badges. These badges, visible for 10 yards, are similar to those issued to troops in the Maginot line and to the population of the towns of Northern France. Special pocket flash-lamps, with bulbs coloured dark blue, were also sold.

LEGACIES.

The late Dr. Emil Koch in Lucerne has left an amount of 20,000 frs. to the cantonal hospital. M. E. A. Bohnenblust-Cappeler from Aarburg, has bequeathed 20,000 frs. to the community of Aarburg for charitable purposes.

SWISS CITIZENS ARE LEAVING CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

Swiss nationals living in Czechoslovakia have been advised by the Swiss Legation to leave the country.

NEUHAUSEN AM RHEINFALL.

The Federal Council has sanctioned the change of name, from "Neuhausen" to "Neuhausen am Rheinfall."

SWISS NEWSPAPER DEMANDS LARGE AIR FORCE.

"Die Tat," the organ of National-Councillor Duttweiler, demands the purchase of one thousand aeroplanes of the fighter type only in order to safeguard the country against possible attack.

The Swiss air defence relies at present on 150 planes only, which is regarded as insufficient to keep an enemy at bay. The immediate erection of a Swiss aircraft factory is urged, and furthermore, it is demanded that at least 300 planes should be acquired abroad without delay, with an order for seven hundred more to be delivered later.

PROFESSOR DUMAS.

The Federal Insurance Office has suffered a great loss through the death at the age of 58 of Professor Samuel Dumas. The deceased was from 1914-1925 Professor at the University of Lausanne; in 1925 he was appointed Director of the Federal Insurance Office, which post he held until he died. Professor Dumas rendered eminent services to our country and his death is deeply felt by all those who came in contact with him.

FEDERAL-COUNCILLOR MINGER AND SWISS ARMY.

On the occasion of a patriotic meeting, arranged by the cantonal Peasant Party in Burgdorf, which was attended by over 15,000 members, Federal-Councillor Minger, head of the Federal Military Dept., said in his address: "We can have full confidence in our army, knowing that there is no reliance on outside help, we have created an army which can face any eventualities." M. Minger made an appeal to all Parties to work together in harmony for the welfare of the country.

SWISS-GERMAN FRONTIER TALKS.

The Swiss Government is negotiating with Germany to straighten out frontier idiosyncrasies. The rectifications in question are near the western end of Lake Constance.

Owing to the meanderings of the Rhine at this point, close to the famous Rhine Falls, the irregular shape of the frontier has long been an inconvenience to farmers wishing to sell their

produce in their own country. The roads frequently cross and recross foreign territory.

Bissingen is in a small circle of German land surrounded by Swiss territory, while the Swiss town of Stein and its countryside are entirely encircled by Germany.

SWISS DEFENCES.

In the Haute Savoie the units of the anti-aircraft defences have occupied the observation posts assigned to them on the mountains. On the Swiss border all along the Rhine and Jura mountains, and at the eastern end of the Lake of Geneva, bridges, roads, and railway lines are guarded by Swiss soldiers of the frontier defence force, while the fortifications are completely manned and equipped with all their artillery. So far the Federal Government has taken no further measures.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS ADMINISTRATION.

For several years interested observers of the affairs of the Swiss Federal Railways have argued as to which of three bodies really is responsible for the management of that undertaking, the Government railway department, the board of administration (Verwaltungsrat), or the general management, but until the Swiss Government takes steps to clarify the position the answer to the problem is likely to remain obscure. Actually, the Swiss Federal Railways have, since 1898, been regarded more or less as State lines, for from that year the Government assumed responsibility for covering any deficits which might be shown in the railway balance-sheets. Hence, the Swiss Government, through its railway department, is the ultimate authority when important decisions have to be made. The board of administration comprises fifteen members, the majority of these being industrialists, traders and economists, whilst the general management comprises the chairman and two general managers of the Swiss Federal Railways, those three officers being responsible for all questions concerning railway operation, new works and staff matters. Both the board of administration and general management are appointed by the Government, which also appoints the three divisional managers at Lucerne, Lausanne and Zurich. In point of fact, the general management invariably makes decisions, and these are almost invariably approved by the board of administration, which acts more as a consultative than a deliberative body, and never takes the initiative. Such being the case, the feeling is growing that the board of administration should be eliminated, leaving the general management in full control of the undertaking and with responsibility only to the railway department of the Government.

R.G.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Dr. Martin Rickli, Professor at the Federal Technical University in Zurich, has celebrated his 70th birthday.

* * *

The death is reported from Zurich, of Dr. Hermann Häberlin, late National Councillor, at the age of 76.

The deceased enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most successful medical practitioners in the town of Zurich.

Dr. Häberlin was a member of the Municipal Council, as well as of the "Kantonsrat" for a great number of years; he also held a seat in Parliament (National Council).

BASLE.

From Basle comes the news of the death of Dr. Christian Rothenberger-Klein, one of the leaders of the Basle Liberals at the beginning of this century. He was for many years a member of the Grand Council over which he presided in 1910. He was a member of the National-Council from 1908-1919.

* * *

After a long illness Dr. Ernst Thalmann, late States-Councillor, has died in Basle at the age of 57.

The canton of Basle loses thus one of its leading politicians.

Dr. Thalmann entered the Grand Council in 1911, and from 1928-1935 represented the canton Basle in Parliament (States Council).

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

GOLDEN JUBILEE FESTIVITIES

MEMBERS' EVENING

on

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14th, 1938

at

Pagani's Restaurant,

Great Portland Street, W.1.

(TOWN DRESS) 6.30 for 7 p.m.

JUBILEE BANQUET and BALL

on

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15th, 1938

at the

Trocadero, Piccadilly Circus, W.1.

(EVENING DRESS) 6.30 for 7 p.m.

TICKETS for both functions at 18/-; for Members' Evening only 5/- and for Banquet only 14/6 can be obtained at Swiss House, 34-35, Fitzroy Square, W.1. (Tel. Museum 6663), City Office, 24, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.4 (Tel. City 3310) and Swiss Observer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2 (Tel. Clerkenwell 2321/2).