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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

Thanks to satisfactory imports and to the official wish to stimulate a merry Xmas a welcome increase in the December food rations has been announced. This refers especially to farinaceous foods and sugar, the quota for the latter being 2,000 grammes against 1,500 in November.

The index figure of living costs shows the comparatively small increase of 2.5% as compared with October 1938; it is mainly due to higher prices for meat and fats.

Swiss exports continue to show a marked decline which for October was 39 million francs as compared with the same month last year; the total of 94 million francs represents about 55% of the imports for the same period. For the nine months to October last imports amounted to 1,438 millions (1,324 in 1938) and exports to 1,059 million francs (1,666 in 1938). Increased exports are recorded to the United States of America, Russia, Spain and Belgium.

That the suzerainty of the cantons can at times traverse the dispositions of the Federal government is shown by a decision of the Regierungsrat of Baselland. Two members were elected to the National Council but the cantonal constitution allows only one member of the local body to go to Berne. The lot was drawn and Hilfiker (Soc.) had to retire in favour of Dr. Gschwind (Cath.). — In St. Gall, Otto Pfändler will have to desert his newly acquired fauteuil in the National Council unless he prefers to resign his present appointment as teacher at the local elementary school.

Some consternation in Fribourg political circles was caused when a scrutiny of the election figures for the National Council brought to light that contrary to results published originally the former National and Federal Councillor J. M. Musy had failed to secure the requisite majority.

In St. Gall four members of the Regierungsrat have been elected National Councillors and as during their obedient absence the necessary quorum is also

missing, a proposal is being formulated to the effect that two members only may journey to Berne in future.

In the elections for the Grand Conseil in Geneva the socialists lost five of their former 40 seats; the old "Nicole" party secured 28 mandates and the recently created "Rosselet" section seven. The Conseil consists of a hundred members. Since 1933 the socialists have suffered a gradual reduction in favour of the radicals.

Geological indications in certain districts (in Aargau and Vaud) have encouraged the belief in the existence of deposits or wells containing mineral oils. Borings have so far not justified the expectations. It is now stated that the research station at Cuarny near Yverdon which was built in spring 1936 and financed by a Dutch syndicate is being dismantled; drilling under considerable difficulties at a depth of 1,600 metres did not encourage the explorers to proceed further. It was originally intended to go down to 2,500 metres.

The circulation in Switzerland of offensive pamphlets attacking our government and especially M. Motta has led to the discovery of several secret movements directed from abroad. One of these spurious groups has been traced to Stuttgart whose leader is one named Leonhardt, who, along with others took refuge abroad when proceedings for a similar charge were instituted some time ago. Masquerading under the name "Swiss Society for Authoritarian Democracy" adherents were found in Switzerland, ten of the latter have been arrested but only five are being detained. The Federal prosecutor has transmitted the matter to the cantonal authorities of Baselstadt for investigation. Another group is said to operate from Lörrach.

## CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que

### L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aura lieu Mardi le 5 Décembre à 5.30 h. précises au Restaurant PAGANI 42, Great Portland Street, W.1.

#### ORDRE DU JOUR :

Procès-verbal.

Démissions.

Admissions.

Divers.

Le souper est facultatif et les participants sont priés de bien vouloir s'inscrire au plus tôt auprès de Monsieur P. F. Boehringner, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 2321/2).

Le Comité