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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss National Day has been celebrated with the ringing of church bells, festival fires on peaks, and in Berne with the solemn reception of the 20-year old into citizenship. Federal President Celio attended the National Day festivities at Bellinzona where he delivered the official oration, (reproduced in another column). In a patriotic speech at St. Gall, Federal Councillor Dr. Kobelt stated that the immunity of our country was mainly due to the trust of all the belligerents in the soundness of our political constitution and the faultless neutrality attitude of our government ignoring both threats and allurements.

* * *

The Swiss colony in Lisbon celebrated the 1st of August in a singular manner: our compatriots assembled on the Swiss steamer Chasseral which happened to be anchoring in the harbour.

* * *

The American Radio broadcast a special programme on August 1st under the title "Hail Switzerland." Apart from a short retrospect dealing with our independance, a selection of Swiss popular songs was followed by an address by Minister Bruggmann, at whose residence in Washington about 150 compatriots celebrated the occasion.

* * *

On August 3rd, 1943, the Federal decree according to which the Swiss Federal Council has the right to deprive unworthy Swiss living abroad, who have acted against the interests of the Confederation, of their Swiss citizenship has for the first time been put into effect. Major Leonhard from Basle (living in Frankfurt a.M.) and Max Burri, from Lucerne, both previously condemned "*in contumaciam*" for high treason are from August 3rd no longer considered as Swiss citizens. The Swiss Radio adds that they will thus be prevented from shielding their subversive activities behind the cloak of Swiss citizenship.

* * *

The text of the reply to the note about war criminals addressed to the Federal Council has so far

not been published, but in Swiss official circles it is maintained that Switzerland will exercise her right of asylum in conformity with the best interests of the country. The attitude of the Federal Government is strongly supported by the press and here are a few extracts we have so far come across:

"*Der Bund*" — "Considering that no concrete case exists, that only possibilities are now envisaged, the British Note and President Roosevelt's statement assume the nature of a warning and of pressure — a step unusual towards a State with which friendly and peaceful relations are maintained.

"Switzerland is not called upon either now or in the future, to give any judgment on the question of responsibility for the war. It belongs to Switzerland's best traditions that the right of asylum should be interpreted in a generous fashion."

"*Gazette de Lausanne*" — "We should lose one of the most essential privileges of an independant State if we agreed to bow to foreign interference in this sphere."

"*Winterthur Tagblatt*" — "The question of whether the Swiss right of sanctuary ends cannot and must not be influenced by foreign desires. Whatever may be the political creed of strangers knocking at the door, Switzerland will not give or refuse admission at foreign behest."

"*Basler National Zeitung*" — "Since when are the war aims of a combatant party binding upon neutrals?"

"*Volksrecht*" — "Those who acknowledged neither tolerance nor right of sanctuary and who flooded other countries with refugees, perhaps secretly hoping thereby to weaken the internal strength of those countries, cannot simply expect the traditional right of sanctuary to be exercised on their behalf. Each

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les Membres sont avisés que

L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aura lieu mardi le 7 Septembre à 7h.15 et sera précédée d'un dîner à 6h. précises au Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, W.1.

ORDRE DU JOUR:

Procès-verbal.

Admissions.

Démissions.

Divers.

"The English in Switzerland"

sera le sujet d'une Conférence par Mons. Arnold Lunn.

Les Membres sont priés de s'inscrire pour le dîner par écrit au plus tard le 4 Septembre auprès de Mons. P. A. Moehr, Hon. Sec., Imperial House, Kingsway, W.C.2. Prière de s'abstenir de téléphoner.

LE COMITE.