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The Swiss Observer

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THE SWISS OBSERVER extends Christmas Greetings to all its friends and wishes to express confidence that 1945 will see the beginning of a new era of happiness for all.



NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal loan of 500 million francs offered for public subscription at the beginning of last month brought in applications for approximately 678 million which will probably be retained in its total by the finance department. The result is considered very satisfactory in view of the fact that the budget for 1945 of the Confederation anticipates a deficit of 173 million francs.

The central committee of the Swiss Socialist party met at Zürich to consider the political outlook both at home and abroad created by the Russian attitude. It recorded its satisfaction at the resignation of M. Pilet-Golaz who had promptly re-acted to the failure of his diplomatic activity though the non-success was largely assisted by his colleagues who were unable to grasp the situation. The committee further expressed the opinion that it was essential to modify the existing methods of appointing the personnel of our diplomatic and consular service. The Socialist party in conformity with a resolution passed in autumn 1943 will insist on occupying a second seat in the Federal Council. It was also decided to launch an immediate initiative demand insisting on the repeal of certain restrictions prohibiting activities by extreme left parties and on the full return of the constitutional personal liberty.

The managing committee of the Swiss Democratic party also met to review the position stating that the resignation of our foreign minister would clarify the principles which will guide our national policy in future. It demanded the immediate restitution of the constitutional personal liberties and thus taking account of the political maturity of the Swiss people. The party favours an enlarged Federal Council of nine members which would give a better representation and increase the confidence of the people.

A Communist delegation which called on the Federal authorities at Berne to sustain the demand for the removal of the ban on the Communist party and its propaganda was refused admission.

Socialists and other left wing interests are reported to be campaigning for the resignation of Federal Councillor von Steiger who is accused of pro-Nazi tendencies.

National Councillor Robert Grimm, the well-known Socialist leader from Berne, has been elected vice-president of the National Council with a notable majority.

During the discussion of the 1945 budget in the National Council, Federal Councillor Nobs, chief of the Finance Department, stated during the coming year that an end to hostilities in Europe may be anticipated but not a return to normal conditions. Strict economies were still on the order of the day for all ministries, the more so as the deficit on the ordinary budget alone was likely to reach 174 million francs.

According to the Swiss radio on December 4th, the President of the National Council has resigned following the Russian refusal to resume diplomatic relations. It seems to us a very strange expedient, as the President of our Lower House fulfills practically the same functions as the Speaker of the House of Commons, who simply directs the proceedings. In the place of Dr. Paul Gysler, who represented Zürich, the Council elected as its President National Councillor Dr. Pierre Aebi, a Conservative Catholic from Fribourg.

In the National Council the Zürich Democrat, Schmid-Ruedin justified a postulate that the necessary dispositions should be decreed enabling electors to record their votes where they happen to stay (like soldiers) instead of at their legal domicile.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les Membres sont avisés que

L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aura lieu mercredi le 10 janvier 1945 à 5.30, dîner à 6h. précise au Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W. 1.

ORDRE DU JOUR :

Procès-verbal.

Démissions.

Admissions.

Divers.

L'invité d'honneur du club The Rt. Hon. Sir William Jowitt, P.C., K.C., nous parlera au sujet du "National Insurance".

Les membres sont priés de s'inscrire par écrit pas plus tard que le 8 janvier auprès de M. P. A. Moehr, Hon. Secr., Imperial House, Kingsway, W.C.2. Prière de s'abstenir de téléphoner.

LE COMITE.