

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

Speaking for Switzerland at the Havana trade conference, Dr. Stucki said Switzerland would be unable to join the International Trade Organization if the trade charter was kept in its present form. The present charter would be a "catastrophe" for Switzerland. As a hard currency country without exchange controls and without balance-of-payment difficulties she was in a peculiar position. This should be recognized by giving her the same right to use import restrictions when needed as were already provided for countries like Britain in balance-of-payment difficulties.

Dr. Stucki said that with such protection Switzerland could continue a trade policy that was liberal but was based on a *quid pro quo* and that had enabled her to maintain her economy on a relatively high level. He introduced an amendment embodying his idea. Some of the European countries agreed that Switzerland's was a special case and a working group was set to studying it.

\* \* \*

Switzerland has sent a delegation to the International Man-power Conference which was opened in Rome on the 28th of January. The delegation is headed by Monsieur R. de Weck, Swiss Minister in Italy.

\* \* \*

It is learned that two leading Swiss banks, the Swiss Bank Corporation and the Credit Suisse, will grant a loan to the French collieries totalling (U.S.) \$10 millions for the purchase of equipment in the United States as well as in Switzerland.

\* \* \*

Alarmed by the cost-of-living rise and the danger of inflation, the Swiss Government has submitted to the chief industries and labour organisations a plan to stabilise wages.

\* \* \*

The latest weekly return of the Swiss National Bank shows a decline in foreign exchange holdings of Frs.8,400,000 to Frs. 104,000,000, while the gold reserve slightly advanced by Frs.1,200,000 to Frs.5,256,000,000.

Bank notes in circulation rose by as much as Frs. 175,800,000 to Frs.4,320,000,000, which represents a new height.

\* \* \*

Dr. Julian Huxley, General Secretary of UNESCO has been received at the Palais Fédéral by Monsieur Petitpierre, the Swiss Foreign Minister, this visit was followed by a Press Conference. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

A Swiss Trade Delegation, headed by Dr. M. Troendle, has left Berne for Moscow to start negotiations concerning a new Trade Agreement. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has appointed the following delegates to attend a conference dealing with a European Customs Union, which will take place in Brussels next month: Monsieur E. Lardy, Swiss Minister in Brussels, Piere Dupont, Secretary of Legation and F. Rudolf of the Federal Customs Office. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

M. Trygve Lie, General Secretary of UNO, has paid a courtesy visit to the Swiss Foreign Minister, Monsieur Max Petitpierre. [A.T.S.]

### Cantonal

Dr. Dietrich Schindler, the Swiss jurist and chairman of the management committee of the Liberal "Neue Zürcher Zeitung," has died in Zurich in his fifty-eighth year.

Dr. Schindler was the son of a well-known Zurich industrialist. He studied jurisprudence at the universities of Zurich, Leipzig and Berlin, and after a short time spent in industry became in 1921 a lecturer in public law at Zurich. Subsequently as professor he acquired some note by his studies of constitutional and international law. He had begun his connection with the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" in 1924 and in 1929

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he became a member of the management committee. He took over the chairmanship in 1940 and successfully guided the paper through the difficult years of the war and after. As a Liberal he was not politically active, except for a short period as a member of the Zurich Cantonal Council. But his influence was always felt in the Swiss Liberal party, and in the spring of 1947 he visited Oxford for the conference on the foundation of the "Liberal International."

The Foundation "Pro Senectute" in Zurich, for elderly single women, has received a legacy amounting to 197,917,000.—frs. from the late Miss Anna Oakley, in Zurich. [A.T.S.]

Professor Dr. Th. Spoerri *Ordinarius* of the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Zurich, has been elected rector for the period 1948/50. [A.T.S.]

The late Xaver Jten-Stocker has left an amount of 30,000.—frs. to the community of Unterägeri (Zug) towards the erection of an orphanage. [A.T.S.]

Previous to taking back to the U.S.A. the bodies of American soldiers who had died in Switzerland during the last war, a service was held at the American cemetery in Munsingen, (Ct. Berne) at which the American Minister and high officers of the Swiss army assisted. [A.T.S.]

Pastor Dagobert Voumard, for many years President of the community of Courtelary (Ct. Berne), and a well-known preacher, has died at the age of 55. The deceased was editor of the "Vie Protestante."

[A.T.S.]

In the presence of all the members of the government of the canton of Solothurn, a celebration was held in the government building in honour of the former Federal-Councillor Dr. W. Stampfli.

Dr. Max Obrecht, "Landammann" expressed the thanks of the cantonal authorities for the eminent services he had rendered to our country as a member of the Federal Government.

The town of Olten has nominated Dr. W. Stampfli, citizen of honour. [A.T.S.]

## SWISS YOUTH CLUB

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All young Swiss people are cordially invited to spend their evenings at the Clubroom, at

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from 5 to 10 p.m., admission free.

Dances with a good band are organised on frequent Saturdays. Admission to these 2/6d.

Dr. Ernst Preiswerk, Head of the Chemical Laboratories, Hoffmann-La Roche, A.G., in Basle, has died at the age of 70. [A.T.S.]

From Herisau (Appenzell a.Rh.) comes the news of the death of Colonel Hans Ruckstuhl, at the age of 80.

During the first world war the deceased was "Kreiskommandant" of Herisau. From 1919-1921 Colonel Ruckstuhl was a member of the cantonal government and "Landammann." He was, at one time, commander of the Infantry Brigade 16. He took an active part in all spheres of his native canton. [A.T.S.]

The Federal Music Festival will take place in St. Gall from the 10th—12th July, 1948. [A.T.S.]

The death is reported from Baden (Aargau) of "Stadtammann" Karl Killer, at the age of 70. The deceased, was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Aargau since 1913 over which he presided in 1922/23. From 1919-1943, he sat in Parliament (Nat. Council) as a socialist. In 1943, he entered the States Council in succession to the late Gottfried Keller. He was Mayor of the town of Baden for the last twenty years. [A.T.S.]

The canton of Ticino is celebrating next month the 150th anniversary of its independence (insurrection of Lugano, 1798). In remembrance of this event, the Grand Council will hold a special meeting. The above mentioned event was instrumental in bringing the canton of Ticino into the Confederation in the year 1803. [A.T.S.]

Sig. Polli (Liberal) has been elected unanimously Mayor of the town of Lugano. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Robert Guex, a member of the Federal Tribunal at Lausanne, has died from an apoplectic fit. The deceased was born in 1881, in Lausanne, in which town he practised as an advocate from 1907-1910.

From 1910-1924 he occupied the post of clerk of the Federal Court. Two years later (1926), he was appointed Professor of Law at the University of Lausanne, which post he kept until his nomination as a Federal Judge in 1933. [A.T.S.]

M. Pierre Oguey, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud has been elected a member of the cantonal government in succession to M. Rubattel, the newly appointed member of the Federal Council.

M. Oguey, who is an engineer by profession was born in 1900, at Lausanne, and is a citizen of Ormont-Dessous. He studied engineering at the University of Lausanne where he took his degree. After having been for several years in a Private establishment he received an appointment as Professor at the University of Lausanne.

He designed the plans for the electrical power works of Lavey which will be opened next year. M. Oguey has sat in the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud, as a radical, for the last ten years. [A.T.S.]

The death has occurred in Lausanne of Max de Cérenville at the age of 73. The deceased was from 1927-1943 Manager of the Insurance Company "La Suisse" and since 1943 President of the Board; de

Cérenville was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud and sat in Parliament (Nat. Council) from 1920-1923. He enjoyed the reputation of being an expert on Insurance matters. [A.T.S.]

Federal-Councillor von Steiger had a narrow escape when a car in which he travelled skidded on an ice-bound road near Chalet-à-Gobet (Vaud) and collided with another car. He escaped injury but the car was badly damaged. [A.T.S.]

On the occasion of the 100th birthday of Mme. Léderrey-Howald, a celebration was held in the church of Grandvaux, in the presence of Edouard Jaquet, President of the Government of the canton of Vaud.

Mme. Léderrey, who originates from Wangen a.A., was presented with the traditional easy chair and a birthday cake adorned with 100 candles. [A.T.S.]

M. Paul Nerfin, a member of the government of the canton of Vaud, has been nominated President of the organisation committee of the Federal Gymnastic Festival, which will take place at Lausanne in 1951, in succession to Federal Councillor Rubattel. [A.T.S.]

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the revolution in the canton of Neuchâtel (1848) a patriotic play, specially written by Jules Baillods, librarian in La Chaux-de-Fonds will be produced. The music has been composed by Daniel Reichel in Le Locle. [A.T.S.]

Some time ago a burglary took place at the Bijouterie Richard in La Chaux-de-Fonds when goods amounting to 18,000.—frs. were stolen.

On the day following the burglary an advocate of the town handed to the police all the stolen goods which were given to him by his "client," who requested him to return them to the owner.

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CHAncery 6917.

As the lawyer refused to divulge the name of his client, the police continue their investigations as to the author of the burglary. [A.T.S.]

### Traffic

During December of last year the Swiss Federal Railways have carried 18.18 million passengers, one million more than in December, 1946. The receipts from passenger traffic have reached the total of 21.47 million francs.

The goods traffic has also increased by 220,000 tons, resulting in receipts amounting to 33.23 million francs. [A.T.S.]

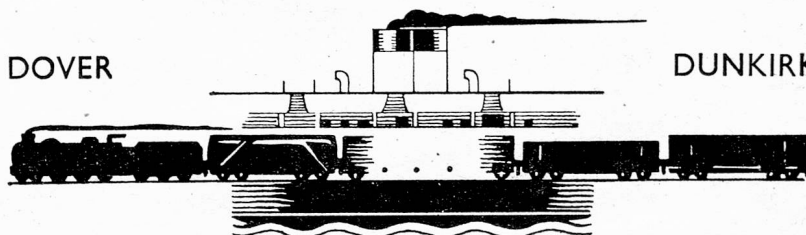
The Douglas Air Liner DC-4HB, of the Swissair, started from the Airport of Cointrin on the 23rd of this month on a flight to Sydney (Australia). Intermediary landings took place at Lydda, Basra, Karachi, Calcutta, Bombay, Colombo, Singapore, Batavia and Port Darwin.

The Journey has taken five days. The return

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journey, over the same route will start on February 1st, arriving at the Airport of Cointrin on the 5th.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

At the present time Swissair have over 23 'planes at their disposal. In addition to 5 smaller units (totalling 4080 H.P. and a passenger payload of 46), which are used for circular, alpine and special flights, the following are now available for *service routes* and for the *freight transport*:

- 11 Douglas DC-3's (payload 21 passengers, each)
- 4 Douglas D.C.-4's (payload 44 passengers, each)
- 3 Douglas DC-3's (accommodating 3 tons of freight, each).

The engine horse-power of these Douglas machines totals 56,000. Leaving aside the 3 freight 'planes, which together total 7,200 H.P. and 78½ cu. yards of freight capacity, the 38 engines develop, when the available accommodation for 407 passengers is in use, a total of 48,800 H.P. representing nearly 120 H.P. per passenger.

\* \* \*

The celebrated "Spanischbrötli" railway has carried from April-November, 1947, altogether 309,000 passengers, of which 160,000 were school children, covering 25,000 km.

### Humanitarian

On the 16th of this month the 30,000th child arrived in Buchs in connection with the children's help scheme for Austria and Hungary sponsored by the Swiss Red Cross.

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A simple celebration was held on this occasion, during which René Steiner, Head of the reception service thanked all the voluntary helpers and the numerous Swiss families who have in the past accepted these children. [A.T.S.]

— 00 —

The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1947: Glarner Kantonalbank: 3½ per cent.; Solothurnische Leihkasse: 5 per cent.; Gewerbebank Zurich: 7 per cent.; Zuger Kantonalbank: 6 per cent.; Bank in Burgdorf: 6 per cent.; Volksbank Willisau, A.G.: 4½ per cent. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The following couples have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary: Mr. and Mrs. C. Burgat-Maccabez, Saint Aubin and Mr. and Mrs. B. Fry-Dafforin, Disentis.

\* \* \*

Mr. Arthur Woodburn, Secretary of State for Scotland, in a letter to the Swiss Minister in London, thanks him for the kindness shown by Swiss families who acted as hosts to 200 delicate Scottish children on a three months holiday in Switzerland organised by the Swiss Red Cross.

"Reports which I have received from those who have been concerned in the scheme in this country, and who have seen the children before their departure and on their return," the letter says, "make it abundantly clear that the visit to Switzerland was a most happy experience for the children and that it has been of great benefit to them in many ways. The kindness and care which had been bestowed upon them by their Swiss hosts were evidenced not only by the manifest improvement in their health and by their wish to return to Switzerland at the earliest opportunity but also by the generous gifts which they brought back with them. I am profoundly grateful to the Swiss families which have done so much for those children."

\* \* \*

It now seems that the wolf which was shot near Eichholz in the middle of December could not have been the much hunted "Beast of the Valais." Geneva scientists who examined the animal found that it was only about 18 months old, and was therefore born after the mysterious killing of sheep and calves had begun in the Valais. This is the first time that a wolf has been shot in Switzerland since 1821.

It is still supposed that the "Beast" was a wolf — or perhaps a pair of wolves, and it is pointed out that only recently, in the forest of Finges, a peasant put to flight two animals which looked like wolves. Gamekeepers are again on the watch, but the new beat that has been ordered is not expected to yield any result until the low country is sufficiently covered with snow.

\* \* \*

They have the right idea in Basle, where the Swiss children are being taught good manners in public.

For a week, any child who omits to give up his tram or bus seat to age will be told about it by specially appointed senior pupils.

\* \* \*

Mr. George Tomlinson, Minister of Education, has sent a letter to the Swiss Minister in appreciation of the work of the Swiss Red Cross in the arrangements which enabled 1,200 delicate British children to spend a three-months holiday in Switzerland and in acknowledgment of the generosity, kindness and sympathy of the Swiss families who cared for them.