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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

A *communiqué* has been issued from the Federal Palais in Berne, in connection with reports which have appeared in the English Press, as to the successor of Dr. Paul Ruegger, Swiss Minister in London. It is stated that the statements made, both in the "*Sunday Times*" and the "*Daily Telegraph*" have no foundation. In any case no *Agrément* from the British Government has yet been received.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. Armin Däniker, to be the first Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to India.

Minister Däniker, was born in 1898 in Zurich. He studied jurisprudence at the Universities of Geneva, Berne, Zurich, Berlin, Rome and London, and obtained his degree of doctor of law from the University of Zurich.

He entered the Diplomatic Service in 1925, and after occupying posts at Riga and Berlin was appointed General Consul at Shanghai.

During the years 1933 and 1934 he was in charge of the Swiss Legation in Tokio. Two years later (1936) Dr. Däniker, received the post of *Chargé d'Affaires* in Teheran, where he remained until 1945.

Previous to his appointment as Minister to India, he was at the Foreign Office in Berne.

The Indian Government has appointed Dr. Dhirajlai Bhulabhai Dasay, to the post of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Swiss Confederation.

The newly appointed Minister was born in 1908, and after completing his studies both in India and Europe, established himself as an advocate at the Supreme Court in Bombay.

Dr. Reinhard Hohl of the Federal Political Department in Berne has received the title of Minister.

Minister Hohl was born in 1893 and hails from Heiden (Appenzell). After having studied law at the Universities of Zurich, Berne and Geneva, he entered

the Swiss Foreign Office in 1919, where he occupied various important posts the latest of which was head of the Department of Legal Financial and Traffic Affairs. In 1941, he was promoted to Counsellor of Legation. Apart from having been sent on various missions abroad, Minister Hohl has not been a member of any Legation.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. Max Iklé, to be the new Director of the Federal Finance Administration in succession to Dr. Reinhard, Dr. Iklé hails from St. Gall and is 45 years of age.

Seventy-five de Havilland Vampire jet fighters, powered by D. H. Goblin turbines, have been ordered by the Swiss Government.

The Swiss order follows a year of intensive trials with a flight of Vampires which were delivered in the Summer of 1946. The Vampires supplied under the new contract will be of more recent type than those of the initial flight. The "long-range" wing, with increased fuel capacity as in the R.A.F. Vampire Mk. III, will be used, and provision for four 60-lb. (27-kg.) high-explosive or armour-piercing R.P. under each wing make the aircraft an adaptable strike-fighter.

In addition to the rockets, one 500-lb. (226-kg.) bomb, or one 100-gallon (455-litre) drop-tank may be fitted under each wing. The standard armament of four 20-mm. Hispano cannon in the fuselage-nose will, of course, be retained.

The Goblin turbine of the Swiss Vampires will be of a later mark, giving higher thrust than the standard Goblin II. The additional power will enable the Vampire to maintain its excellent take-off performance when operating from high-altitude aerodromes.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Trygve Lie, after meeting his consultative committee, announced that this year's regular session of the General Assembly would be held in Paris. The com-

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mittee unanimously advised the Secretary-General that, on the basis of data he had submitted for four European cities — Paris, Brussels, Geneva, and The Hague — Paris offered the most suitable as well as the most economical facilities. The additional cost of holding the session at Geneva would be no more than the present estimate for Paris, but the size of the assembly hall and the main committee rooms in the Palais des Nations is barely adequate, and some hundreds of delegates or officials would have to reside at Lausanne or in more distant towns.

At a Press conference in Berne, Dr. Paul Ruegger, Swiss Minister to London, giving a report on his special mission to India and Pakistan, stated that he was able to start preparations for a trade agreement between India and Switzerland. He admitted that the development of trade relations will be no easy task for European firms.

Switzerland is among 11 non-member countries who will be invited to attend and vote at the forthcoming International Maritime Conference.

Their right to vote was won for them mainly by Britain, whose proposal on the subject was carried by a majority of one in the Economic Council of the United Nations at Lake Success.

Cantonal

The members of the Soviet Sports delegation who attended the Olympic Games at St. Moritz as observers only, were on their homeward journey entertained in Zurich by the Municipal authorities.

During an official luncheon party, the leader of the delegation thanked the mayor of the town, Dr. A. Luchinger, for the invitation, and declared that had the Russians been invited to attend the Olympic games they would have done so. *(It is stated that as the Soviet Government does not allow their nationals to belong to any foreign sports association, no invitation to take part in an international sports event, could have been sent.)* [A.T.S.]

One of the most serious accidents of recent years on the Swiss railways occurred at Waedenswil on the western shore of Lake of Zurich on Sunday last.

A special holiday train from Einsiedeln, full of skiers returning from their week-end in the mountains, jumped the rails at Waedenswil and ran into a large building owned by the Co-operative Society by the side of the railway.

There were about 400 persons on the train, in nine coaches. Four of the coaches were completely destroyed and two were telescoped.

At the station before Waedenswil, which is the lake level junction, it had been noticed that the train was apparently out of control. When it reached Waedenswil, where it was supposed to have stopped, it was travelling at 50 m.p.h.

As far as can be ascertained there is a death roll of twenty, more than fifty have been seriously injured.

The station-master in Marthalen (Ct. Zurich) on returning home late at night found two burglars trying to force an entry into the station building. On challenging them the criminals fired point blank at the station-master but luckily missed him, they then took to their heels. So far no arrest has been made.

[A.T.S.]

A fire which broke out at the factory of the former Mech. Seidenstoffweberei in Adliswil (Ct. Zurich) caused considerable damage.

Dr. Luzius Ruedi, from Thusis, at present Professor of otology at the University of Berne, has been elected Director of the clinic for ear, nose and throat diseases in Zurich, and Professor *ad personam* at the University of this town, in succession to Professor Nager, who recently vacated his post. [A.T.S.]

The death has occurred in Zurich of Karl Paul Täuber-Amsler, senior partner in the firm Trüb, Täuber & C. A. G., scientific instrument makers, at the age of 80.

The deceased received in 1937 the degree of *doctor honoris causa* from the University of Zurich.

[A.T.S.]

Ernest Kreidolf from Tägerwilen (Thurgau) writer and painter, has celebrated his 85th birthday in Berne.

[A.T.S.]

The death is reported from Thun (Ct. Berne) of Fritz Segesser-Gattiker, a former director of the Nestlé company, and at one time Honorary-Consul in Yugo-Slavia. [A.T.S.]

Colonel of division, Ivo Gugger, has celebrated his 60th birthday anniversary in Berne. [A.T.S.]

From Berne comes the news of the death of Dr. Carlo Sganzzini, since 1923 Professor of pedagogy at the University of Berne, at the age of 67. Professor

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Sganzini was born in Vira Gambarogno (Ticino) and studied at the Universities of Leipzig and Berne. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Pater Wilhelm Schmitt, since 1938 Professor of ethnology at the University of Fribourg, has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary.

Pater Schmitt enjoys a wide reputation as an ethnologist and linguist, he is a *doctor honoris causa* of the Universities of Bonn, Louvain, Budapest and Milan. [A.T.S.]

* * *
E. Schwarz-von Spreckelsen, President of the "Leder-Import, A.G.", and a director of the Swiss Sample Fair, a member of the Chamber of Commerce in Basle and other important concerns has been appointed Danish General Consul. A few years ago, the Swedish Government appointed him to the rank of General Consul. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Dr. Paul Häberlin, Professor of Philosophy, Psychology and Pedagogy at the University of Basle, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary.

Professor Häberlin, was appointed at the age of 26, Director of the Seminary in Kreuzlingen. Four years later, he became a teacher at the University of Basle. In 1914, he was called as Professor to the University in Berne, and since 1922 he held the post of Professor at the University of Basle. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Dr. Wilhelm Degen, formerly foreign Editor of the "*Basler Nachrichten*," and Pastor Fritz La Roche, who has been closely connected with the Basle Mission, have both celebrated their 80th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Dr. Konrad Nägeli, since 1930 "Stadtammann" of the town of St. Gall is shortly retiring from his post.

Dr. Nägeli, who is aged 67, was previous to his appointment as "Stadtammann," for a number of years on the editorial staff of the "*St. Galler Tagblatt*." [A.T.S.]

* * *
The late Emil Niderer, butcher in St. Gall, has left an amount of 12,000.— frs. to the community of Walzenhausen, the interest to be used to help old people in need. [A.T.S.]

* * *
Ernst Schmid, from Stein a. Rh., crashed and was killed when piloting a glider machine which he built himself. He was 26 years old. [A.T.S.]

* * *
On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the

revolution in Lugano, which led to the independence of the canton Ticino, various celebrations were held at Lugano in the presence of the cantonal and municipal authorities and dignitaries of the Church. Sig. Pelli, mayor of the town, addressed the citizens of Lugano from the balcony of the town hall. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The urban council of the town of Neuchâtel has decided to erect a monument in memory of the two Neuchâtelois patriots, Petitpierre and Dubois, who in the year 1831, during the revolution, were made prisoners and subsequently died during their imprisonment. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The President of the French Colony in Neuchâtel, Henry Brissot, on behalf of the French Government, presented to nine citizens a medal for the care and help they had given to French internees during the last war. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The government of the canton of Neuchâtel has put a proposal before the Grand Council for the erection of an Air Port at Crête-du Locle. [A.T.S.]

* * *
A fire which broke out at the Chocolate works Suchard in Serrières caused damage estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 200,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The Criminal Court in Neuchâtel has given judgment in the Crédor case.

Emanuel Borel, Delegate of the Board, and Marcel Perrenoud, formerly Sub-Manager of the company, who were charged with criminal negligence have been acquitted.

The Court came to the conclusion that the charges made against the two defendants were not substantiated. [A.T.S.]

Traffic

Since the collapse of Germany in 1945, the 15-mile section of the Reichsbahn line from Singen to Basle which traverses Swiss territory in the neighbourhood of Schaffhausen has been under the administration of the Swiss Federal Railways, although still staffed by Reichsbahn personnel. Negotiations have been in progress for some time for its transfer to the French authorities occupying Southern Germany, and a draft agreement is reported to have been reached for this purpose. The operation of the portion of the line in Switzerland by the Reichsbahn dates to arrangements concluded in 1852 and 1858, and renewed in later years. At Schaffhausen the platform serving the line is fenced

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off from the rest of the station, being considered German territory from the point of view of the railway and customs services. Fares and rates, although nominally in German currency, have to be paid at present in Swiss money. While many criticise the present situation as anomalous, there is local opposition to the transfer of the line among residents in the Schaffhausen district who are accustomed to use its services.

Economics

The new trade and payments agreement concluded with Switzerland in London represents a slight variation on the now familiar "strictly bilateral" theme. The main aim of the agreement, which covers the year ending on February 28th, 1949, is to end the deficit in payments between the sterling area and Switzerland so that further gold losses by the United Kingdom shall be avoided. To make this possible the Swiss are prepared to authorise the importation of all sterling-area goods. At the same time they will control the volume of Swiss exports to the sterling area in such a way as to keep it within the limits set by Swiss imports from sterling-area countries.

Where the Swiss payments' agreement differs from those concluded with a number of other European countries in recent months is in the fact that the Swiss will raise no objection to losing gold to this country. Thus the agreement provides that should sterling-area exports to Switzerland show better results than are now expected, the United Kingdom will be allowed to take the balance in convertible currency.

The Swiss have not insisted that any such balance

should be used to redeem a part of their present £15 million holding of sterling. This decision has been represented as indicating the confidence of the Swiss authorities in the future stability of sterling. That may have been one of the considerations. Another — perhaps more important — was that it was necessary to make some concession to Britain to induce the Government to remove (as it is doing from May 1st next) the ban on British travel to Switzerland.

Humanitarian

Swiss doctors will arrive in Manchester soon to select 145 delicate schoolchildren for a three-month spring holiday in Switzerland at the expense of the Swiss Government.

They will leave next month accompanied as far as Basle by 15 teachers, who will there hand them over to the care of the Swiss Red Cross. The children will stay with private families.

—oOo—

The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1947: Schweiz. Bankverein, Basle: 6 per cent. (1946: 5%); Schweiz. Volksbank, Berne: 4 per cent. (1946: 4%); Schweiz. Bankgesellschaft, Zurich: 6 per cent.; Schweiz. National Bank: 6 per cent.; Schweiz. Credit-Anstalt, Zurich: 6 per cent. (1946: 5%); Bank für Anlage Werte, Zurich: 7 per cent. (1946: 7%).

The following couples have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary: Mr. and Mrs. M. Zimmermann-Tschudi in Ennenda. Mr. and Mrs. Ch. Balmer in Le Locle.

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