

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1951)

Heft: 1163

Rubrik: News at random

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Advisory Council: R. DE CINTRA (Chairman); O. F. BOEHRINGER, LS. CHAPUIS, J. EUSEBIO, GOTTFRIED KELLER, R. KELLER, R. PFENNINGER, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

EDITED BY A. STAUFFER WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE SWISS COLONY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 2321/2.

Published Twice Monthly at 23, LEONARD STREET, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 36. No. 1163.

FRIDAY, JULY 27th, 1951.

PRICE 11d.

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MESSAGE DU PRESIDENT DE LA CONFEDERATION.

Mes chers compatriotes,

Au soir du 1er Août, lorsque sonnent les cloches et que s'allument les feux sur les hauteurs, c'est aussi vers vous, mes chers compatriotes de l'étranger, que se portent nos pensées. Votre sort nous tient à cœur. Beaucoup d'entre vous, nous le savons, sont aux prises avec des difficultés. Mais c'est lorsque les temps sont troublés et les lendemains incertains que nous sentons tous, plus fortement encore que dans un monde paisible, les liens de la fraternité qui nous unissent.

Nous savons, Suisses de l'étranger, que vous n'oubliez pas la Patrie et que vous ne l'oublierez jamais. Nous savons qu'en ce jour de Fête nationale c'est vers la Suisse que se tournent vos regards et qu'une seule pensée unit tous les Confédérés, où qu'ils se trouvent, en une intime communion.

Le Conseil fédéral et le peuple suisse tout entier vous adressent leurs vœux les meilleurs. Ce salut de la Patrie témoigne de notre volonté de rester tous unis, quelles que puissent être les distances qui nous séparent.

Puissent le bonheur et la prospérité être accordés à toutes nos colonies. Puisse le travail des Suisses de l'étranger être couronné de succès.

Notre vœu le plus ardent est qu'en ce jour du 1er Août, le même amour de la Patrie anime le cœur de tous les Suisses, au pays comme à l'étranger.

Ed. de Steiger,

Président de la Confédération.

Berne, Juillet 1951.



NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal On Sunday, July 8th, the Swiss electorate went to the poll on the "Initiative sur l'imposition des entreprises publiques". This initiative was rejected by 165,601 votes against 341,256; only 36% of the voters registered their votes. Here are the particulars:—

Cantons.	Yes.	No.
Zurich	60,303	79,578
Berne	17,228	34,980
Luzern	5,278	12,502
Uri	1,081	1,953
Schwyz	1,284	3,811
Obwalden	360	1,428
Nidwalden	299	2,145
Glarus	1,313	3,332
Zug	1,304	1,618
Fribourg	1,787	8,608
Solothurn	6,379	10,462
Baselstadt	2,146	12,626
Baselland	2,274	6,713
Schaffhausen	5,235	6,315
Appenzell A.Rh.	3,014	4,834
Appenzell I.Rh.	288	862
St. Gallen	11,432	35,802
Graubünden	5,866	9,159
Aargau	17,014	44,186
Thurgau	8,980	16,008
Ticino	1,000	6,110
Vaud	5,576	18,683
Valais	2,076	4,734
Neuchâtel	2,136	7,011
Genève	1,929	7,796
TOTAL	165,601	341,256

The newly appointed Indian Minister, Monsieur Nedyam Raghavan, was received by Monsieur v. Steiger, President of the Swiss Confederation and Monsieur Petitpierre on the presentation of his credentials as Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of India.

Minister Raghavan was educated in India and England, he practised as a lawyer in Malaya. In 1947,

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he was appointed Consul General in Indonesia, and a year later (1948) he was sent to Czecho-Slovakia as Ambassador. In 1950, he was transferred to Brussels in the same capacity.

* * *

Dr. Luis E. del Valle, has presented his credentials as Minister of Cuba, to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

He practised as a lawyer and journalist in the United States of America, and from 1940-1948 was a senator.

* * *

Customs receipts for the month of June 1951, totalled 51.8 million francs, or 4.8 million frs. more than in June 1950.

The receipts for the half year 1951 are returned as 312.1 million francs, which exceeds by 62.3 million francs the receipts for the same period in 1950.

Cantonal

The traditional "Sempacher Schlachtfeier" was held on July the 9th at Sempach (Ct. Lucerne). A large procession wended its way to the historic battlefield where various speeches were made. The government of the canton of Lucerne was represented by four of its members. (Dr. F. X. Leu, Emil Emenegger, Adolf Käch and Dr. Hans Rogger). The Army was represented by Army-Corps Commander Nager and Colonel of Division Rösler. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. Hans Martin, a Hotelier of Zurich, and his passenger, had a narrow escape when his aeroplane on making an emergency landing collided with a tree, both occupants were unhurt whilst the plane was totally wrecked. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A young man, under the influence of alcohol, jumped into the swimming pool of a polar bear at the Zurich Zoo. A few minutes later the female polar bear "Gretel" dived into the basin, and tried to get hold of him. Owing to the efforts of some of the visitors and one of the keepers the young man was rescued from his perilous situation without suffering any injuries. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. Eric Streiff, special correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" has been appointed one of the Editors of this paper. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Two persons were killed, when a motor bicycle collided with a lorry on the road Dettenried-Kollbrunn (Ct. Zurich). Both motor-cyclists, Hermann Kollbrunner, aged 56, a locksmith of Dettenried, and his 22 years old son Eric received fatal injuries. [A.T.S.]

* * *

During an aviation rally at the aerodrome of Bienne, Ernest Althaus, a technician from Bienne, offered to take the wives of three of his friends for a short flight in his four-seater Bonanza plane.

Shortly after the take-off, the plane's engine stalled, and the craft dived nose first into the ground. All four occupants were killed, their names are Ernest Althaus, Mesdames W. Sunier and Ph. Droz, of Sonceboz and L. Voisin of Corgémont. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The festivities to celebrate the 450th entry of the canton of Basle into the Confederation started on Thursday, July 12th, at Liestal and Basle.

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At 9 o'clock in the morning all the church bells throughout the "Baselbiets" were ringing.

The "Landrat" of the canton of Basle-County met at Liestal in solemn conclave, and was addressed by its President, Dr. R. Straumann (Waldenburg).

Amongst the invited guests were the members of the Federal Council, representatives of the two Federal Chambers, the Supreme Court, the cantonal governments, the army, the church, the universities, etc., etc.

A large procession, depicting various historical events passed through the gaily beflagged street to the military barracks where a performance of the "Festspiel" entitled "Gottwilche" by E. Wirz (Riehen) was given. The festive gathering was addressed by the Presidents of the governments of the cantons of Basle-Town and Basle-County, Dr. F. Ebi and M. Kaufmann respectively, and by Mr. E. v. Steiger, President of the Swiss Confederation.

As at Liestal, the members of the Grand Council of the canton of Basle-Town assembled at the town hall in Basle to hold a solemn meeting, which was addressed by its President, Mr. Burkhardt. Amidst the thunder of the guns and the pealing of church bells a historic procession was formed, comprising over 12,000 participants, which passed through the richly decorated streets, lined by 10,000 school-children, to the old battlefield of St. Jakob. In the procession, one noticed the members of the Federal Council, who received a specially warm reception.

Patriotic speeches were given by the President of the Swiss Confederation, National-Councillor, Dr. E.

Boerlin, as representative of the government of the canton of Basle-Town, Dr. Fr. Ebi, President of the cantonal government, Professor Edgar Bonjour and Dr. A. Schaller.

A "Festspiel" was performed in the evening in the big Hall of the "Mustermesse". Many of the buildings and monuments were flood-lit and dancing took place in all public places. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Albert Keller (Reute) Appenzell A.Rh., is resigning from the National Council of which he was a member for the last sixteen years. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Gottlob Pflugfelder, Basle, has been appointed Direktor of the "Heil- und Pflegeanstalt Waldhaus" in Chur-Masans. [A.T.S.]

National-Councillor Adolfo Tanner (Locarno) has been elected a member of the government of the canton of Ticino in succession to Mr. Agostino Bernasconi, who was recently killed in a motor accident. His seat in the National Council will be occupied by Mr. Waldo Riva (Lugano), who was a member of the Council previous to 1947. [A.T.S.]

The population of the town of Lausanne on the 1st of July, 1951, numbered 108,261 inhabitants. [A.T.S.]

The new road from Saas Grund to Saas Fee (Ct. Valais), was recently opened, it is 3.8 Km. long and has width of 4 metres. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Geneva for the year 1950 show a credit balance of 6,308,361.—frs. [A.T.S.]

Professor Eug. Pittard will shortly retire from his post as Director of the Museum for "Völkerkunde" in Geneva. [A.T.S.]

: o :

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:—

Henry Bischoff, painter and Professor at the cantonal art school, Lausanne, in Lausanne at the age of 70.

Dr. Phil. Theodor Hafner, a teacher at the secondary school in Zug, and author of the "Festspiel" for last year's centenary celebration of the canton of Zug's entry into the Confederation, in Zug, aged 62. The deceased received, three months ago, the prize for literature of the canton of Zug.

René Koechlin, formerly Manager of the "Elek-

trischen Industriegesellschaft" Basel, in Blonay, at the age of 83.

Edouard Boillot, architect, in Peseux (Ct. Neuchâtel) aged 72.

Fritz Dietler-Jäger, one of the pioneers of the Swiss artificial silk industry, in Lucerne, at the age of 78.

Karl Schobinger, a well-known painter and former pupil of Ferdinand Hodler, in Lucerne, aged 72.

Kurt Düby, a member of the Federal Supreme Court at Lausanne, in Lausanne at the age of 51.

The deceased was a citizen of Zurich and Schüpfen (Ct. Berne). He studied law at the Universities of Berne and Paris after which he practised as a lawyer in Berne and Zurich. From 1943-1946, he was a member of Parliament (National Council). In 1946, he was elected a member of the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne.

Otto Kübler, a former President of the Criminal Court of the canton of Appenzell A.Rh., in Trogen, aged 74. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The following birthday anniversaries are announced from Switzerland:

Francesco Chiesa (80), author. He studied law at the university of Pavia, where he obtained his doctorate. For 50 years he was a teacher of literature and art at the *Gymnasium* in Lugano of which school he was rector for 30 years. In 1897, he published his first poems, and since has written a number of novels amongst them: "Treludio", "La Cattedrali", "La Reggia", etc., etc.

The university of Rome honoured him in 1928 with the title of *doctor honoris causa*, the same honour was bestowed upon him by the University of Lausanne.

Albert Hinter, Engelberg (75) a well-known painter born in Sachseln, he made a name for himself as a painter of stained glass.

Wilh. Wever (60), General Agent (Basle) and a member of the Board of "Radio Basel."

Georg Weber (95), from 1890-1927, a former teacher at the "Freien Schule" in Zurich.

Dr. Jules Tailens (80), he was a Director of the Children's Hospital and Professor at the University of Lausanne of which he was rector from 1924-1926. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The undermentioned have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary (60), in Switzerland: Mr. and Mrs. F. Schwyn-Schneider, of Beringen (Ct. Schaff-

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hausen); Mr. and Mrs. J. Billeter-Winkler, of St. Gall. [A.T.S.]

The following traffic accidents have been reported during the month of June, 1951:—*Ct. Aargau*: 122, six persons killed and 100 injured; *Ct. Fribourg*: 149, two persons killed and 51 injured. [A.T.S.]

The World Bank's public issue in Switzerland of Sw.Frs.50m. (£4.1m.) has been successful. Subscriptions considerably exceeded the amount sought.

Swiss mountain guides will reduce their fares by a third as a result of a Swiss Federal Council decision to make a subsidy to the Mountain Guides' Association.

A day's climbing tour of the Matterhorn will now cost 100 francs (£8 4s.), compared with 150 francs (£12 6s.) in the past.

The Swiss Government warned housewives to lay in a two month's supply of essential provisions, including sugar, rice, fats, oil and soap.

Recalling a similar Government warning last year, the Department of Public Economy said that those families which had consumed stocks should lose no time in replacing them. "In a troubled period such as now," the statement said, "reason demands that citizens of a country without access to the sea should have sufficient supplies on hand."

Official figures just published in Switzerland show that only 43, or 0.3 per cent of the 86,800 Swiss civil servants are Jews. Swiss Jews form 0.5 per cent of the total population in the country.

The "Chanson le vieux pays" from St. Maurice (Ct. Valais), has been awarded the second prize at the International Eisteddfod which took place at Llangollen on the 3rd-8th of July.

A bronze axe dating back to 1,000 B.C. has been uncovered in Schinznach-les-bains.

Figures just issued show that far from being an expensive place to live in, Switzerland can easily hold its own with its neighbours and countries in other parts of the world.

A study of price increases in a number of Western European countries, as well as the U.S.A. since April 1950, shows that prices have jumped from 4 to 23%. Yet, during the same period, prices in Switzerland went up only by three per cent.

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Switzerland's two intercontinental airports of Kloten (Zurich) and Cointrin (Geneva) are developing rapidly as figures for the first three months of 1951 show.

Kloten has recorded a total of 59,602 passengers, a third more than for the same period in 1950, when there were 44,852 passengers. Freight has gone up to 1,439 tons — a jump of 64 per cent — and postal traffic has gone up by 44 per cent. from 277 tons to 398 tons. A third of the passenger traffic — 19,183 people — passed through Kloten in transit.

Regular airlines serving *Cointrin* report that the average number of passengers per plane was 18.4 compared with 15.9 during the first three months of last year.

Daily number of passengers using the airport was 506 (446 in 1950). Total tonnage, including postal and freight traffic and baggage, was almost 30 tons a day, against 22½ tons last year. Passengers during the same period totalled 45,548 (40,184 last year) freight was more than 1,268 tons (749 tons) and postal traffic 357 tons (293 tons).

Happy peals from many belfries will celebrate on August 9th the opening of festivities to mark the 450th anniversary of Schaffhausen's entry into the Swiss Confederation.

Highspots of the celebration will be on Saturday, August 11th, when official guests from all parts of Switzerland will bring greetings. Mr. von Steiger,

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President of Switzerland, will speak, and a historical procession will wind its way through the streets. Then, before an audience of 3,500 people, a play called "Schaffhauser Bundesspiel", written in the Schaffhausen dialect by Albert J. Welti, will be enacted by a company of 500. It will include scenes of the Swabian War, when Swiss soldiers defeated German troops of the Emperor Maximilian and freed the Confederation from the German Empire.

* * *

A map of Switzerland, showing roads open to coaches and other motor vehicles with a maximum width of 94½ inches for Swiss coaches — or 98½ inches if they are from other countries — has been published by the Federal Department of Justice and Police. On the reverse the following notice is printed in English, French, German and Italian:

"Switzerland is a mountainous country. Roads are generally narrow and there are many bends and frequent steep gradients. Therefore vehicles with an overall width of more than 86½ inches are only allowed to circulate on certain roads. On the reverse side you will find a map of the system of these roads. According to Swiss law the maximum overall width for vehicles is 94½ inches but in the interest of tourism the Swiss authorities are allowing on a trial basis foreign coaches with an overall width of not more than 98½ inches to use the roads shown on this map. They are not, however, allowed on any other roads.

Drivers of foreign coaches are requested to use great caution, especially when overtaking or when meeting other vehicles coming from the opposite direction. They should always adjust their speed to road and traffic conditions and should not hesitate in giving the right of way to cars travelling at a higher speed and wishing to overtake. On mountain roads special care is necessary. For your own safety you should use the same gear downhill as you would uphill.

Driving a heavy vehicle is especially tiring in mountainous country. For this reason Swiss law limits to nine hours a day the period during which a driver can be at the wheel. Please do remember this rule. If you follow these instructions your travels in Switzerland will be pleasant and safe."

It is stated that coaches wider than 86½ inches can only use the Amsteg-Goeschenen road if they are going to continue their journey by rail through the St. Gottard tunnel.

Coinciding with last month's celebrations of the entry of the canton of Zurich into the Swiss Confederation 600 years ago, museums in the city are organising several interesting exhibitions. The Art Museum (Kunsthaus) offers a panoramic view of the city's cultural development under the title "Zurich 1351-1951", consisting of old manuscripts, minstrel songs of the 14th century and church windows of the 16th century. At the Helmhaus, there is an exhibition on "Hodler as a Painter of History", devoted to the works of this great Swiss painter.

Another exhibition called "Six hundred years of Zurich Silk" is being held at the Museum of Applied Art (Kunstgewerbemuseum) showing the development of the industry and the talent of Zurich craftsmen. Visitors can walk along an "avenue of silk" decorated with the most recent creations of the Zurich mills. A fine collection of photographs demonstrates the way Zurich silk is being used by famous dress designers of Paris, London and New York.

* * *

The Swiss Government have granted the necessary concession to the Martigny-Orsières Railway to build a new branch line (normal gauge) from Sembrancher to Le Châble. The new line will provide speedy access to the holiday resort of Verbier, whose latest attractions now include a chair lift. It will also be able to carry as far as Le Châble the cement and other building materials needed for the construction of the great Mauvoisin dam, at the far end of the Valley of Bagnes.

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