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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

## The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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### NEWS AT RANDOM

#### Federal

Monsieur Ed. von Steiger, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillor E. Nobs, have announced their retirement from the Government at the end of the current year.

M. von Steiger was born on July 2nd, 1881, in Langnau (Ct. Berne), and belongs to an old Bernese patrician family. He studied *juris prudence* at the Universities of Geneva, Leipzig, Munich and Berne. On the conclusion of his studies, he practised as a lawyer firstly in Langenthal and Burgdorf and afterwards in Berne. In 1941, he entered the Municipal Council of Berne, and the Grand Council of the canton of Berne over which he presided in 1939. In December of the same year, he was elected a member of the government of the canton of Berne, and in the following year (December 10th, 1940) he entered the Federal Government in succession to Federal-Councillor R. Minger, although he was, at the time, not a member of Parliament. He belongs to the Radical Party, and was President of the Swiss Confederation in 1945 and 1951.

Federal-Councillor, E. Nobs, was born on the 14th of July, 1886, in Seedorf (Ct. Berne) and is a citizen of Seedorf, Grindelwald and Zurich. After having passed through the Teachers Seminary in Berne, he obtained a post as teacher in Wynau and Ostermudigen (1906-1912).

From 1912 onwards he occupied various posts as Editor of Socialist papers, first in Lucerne and afterwards at St. Gall. In 1915, he became Editor-in-Chief of the "Volksrecht" Zurich. From 1935-1942, Mr. Nobs was a member of the government of the canton of Zurich and afterwards was elected Mayor of the town of Zurich, which post he held for about two years.

In December 15th, 1943, he was elected a member of the Federal Government in succession to Federal-Councillor Wetter. He was the first Socialist to be a member of the Swiss Government, and our country's first Socialist President (1949).

Federal Chancellor, Dr. Oscar Leimgruber, is vacating his post at the end of this year.

He was born in 1886 at Fribourg and is a citizen of Fribourg and Herznach (Ct. Aargau). On the conclusion of his law studies, he became a member of the Editorial Staff of the papers "Liberté" and "Freiburger Zeitung" and later on practised as a lawyer in Fribourg. From 1912-1919, he was legal advisor to the Swiss Federal Railways and subsequently became Departmental Secretary at the Federal Post and Railway Department. In 1925, Dr. Leimgruber became Vice-Chancellor and in 1944 was appointed Chancellor of the Swiss Confederation.

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M. Hans Hirsbrunner, Swiss Consul in Saigon, has retired from his post, he is succeeded by M. Jean Studer, Vice-Consul in Saigon.

#### Cantonal

Erich Staub, Manufacturer of Mändorf, was killed when his motor car, trying to avoid a cow, crashed into a wall; his lady passenger, a friend of the family, was seriously injured. [A.T.S.]

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The University of Fribourg has honoured Mr. Ernst Meyer, Manager of the firm Meyer & Stüdeli (Watch Manufacturers) in Solothurn, with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*. [3.2.7.]

\* \* \*

The Chamber of Commerce in Basle has celebrated its 75th Jubilee. [A.T.S.]

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On the occasion of the *Dies academicus* the University of Basle has bestowed the degree of *doctor honoris causa* on the following: Prof. T. Reichstein, Dr. A. Wettstein, Dr. Karl Meyer and Paul Sacher (Conductor). [A.T.S.]

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A motorist trying to overtake two lorries, crashed into a column of soldiers at the crossing Münchwilen-Sirnach. Four soldiers were seriously injured; one of them, Walter Russ (born 1929) a commercial employee of Zurich later on succumbed to his injuries. The motorist has been arrested. [A.T.S.]

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A fire which broke out at the Chemical Works, Tobler & Cie, at Altstätten (Rheintal) caused considerable damage, which is estimated to exceed half a million francs. [A.T.S.]

**Army**

A number of changes have taken place in the high command of Swiss army units.

Colonel Walter Jahn, Commander of the 3rd Division, has left active service to become Manager of the "Bernischen Kraftwerke"; he is replaced by Colonel Carl Brunner, Commander of the 2nd Division.

Brigade-Colonel Marcel Tardent, formerly Commander of the 10th Mountain-Brigade, has been promoted to the rank of Colonel of Division, and will take over the Command of the 2nd Division. He was born in 1893, at Ormont-dessous, and belongs to the Federal Instructors Corps (Artillery). He has held the following commands: 2nd Field-Artillery regiment and 10th Mountain-Brigade. For a number of years he was a member of the General Staff.

Colonel Ernst Gross, a member of the Federal Instructors Corps, has been appointed to the command of the 10th Mountain-Brigade, with the rank of Brigade-Colonel. He was born in 1892 at Zurzach, and

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has held various commands, such as: Mountain-Artillery, Section 4, 25th Regiment Heavy Field-Artillery and Chief of Artillery of the 3rd Army Corps.

Brigade-Colonel Ernst Trachsel, hitherto Commander of the 11th Mountain-Brigade, has relinquished his command, he is succeeded by Colonel Ernst Uhlmann, Chief of Staff of the 2nd Army-Corps, with promotion to the rank of Brigade-Colonel.

Brigade-Colonel Alfred Muntwyler, head of the "Kriegsmaterialverwaltung" and Brigade-Colonel Karl Schneider, head of the "Eidg. Landestopographie" are retiring from their posts at the end of this year. Colonel Muntwyler will be replaced by Colonel Schenck of Noville and Ronnaz, a member of the Federal Instructors Corps.

Colonel Richard Frey, Commander of the 7th Division, has been appointed "Waffenchef" of the Infantry, his predecessor, Colonel Joh. Berli, is taking over the command of the 7th Division.

Colonel René Keller (born 1900 in Trub, Ct. Berne) States Prosecutor of the canton of Berne, has been nominated "Oberauditor" of the Swiss Army, in succession to Brigade-Colonel Jakob Eugster, with the rank of Brigade-Colonel.

[A.T.S.]

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The following have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary (60) in Switzerland: Mr. and Mrs. J. Baumann-Bruderer of Neukirch (Ct. Thurgau), and Mr. and Mrs. A. Gass of La Chaux-de-Fonds.

Mr. and Mrs. E. Milloret, of Geneva, have celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. [A.T.S.]