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The Swiss Observer

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

On Sunday, November 23rd, 1952, the Swiss electorate went to the poll on the Price Control (started during the last war), and on the Wheat Monopoly. Both initiatives were accepted. Here are the particulars of the voting:

Zurich	109,249	53,724	115,331	46,151
Bern	83,794	36,663	97,091	22,083
Luzern	18,183	17,470	25,137	10,554
Uri	2,444	2,436	3,734	1,142
Schwyz	3,246	6,225	5,710	3,717
Obwalden	814	1,900	1,484	1,238
Nidwalden	1,343	2,003	2,126	1,234
Glarus	3,993	2,790	5,048	1,752
Zug	3,153	3,379	4,416	2,075
Fribourg	9,456	7,723	13,504	3,603
Solothurn	19,590	8,901	23,033	4,748
Baselstadt	29,000	9,673	32,768	5,553
Baselland	11,516	7,224	15,202	3,570
Schaffhausen	8,495	5,203	10,691	2,888
Appenzell A.Rh.	2,948	6,157	3,452	5,628
Appenzell I.Rh.	689	973	883	797
St. Gallen	26,203	27,891	34,875	17,104
Graubunden	10,021	10,408	15,397	5,001
Aargau	37,794	31,399	48,610	20,465
Thurgau	15,549	15,135	22,200	8,414
Ticino	12,626	3,106	13,404	2,110
Vaud	32,785	14,780	37,464	9,375
Valais	8,483	6,433	10,578	4,009
Neuchâtel	15,429	3,860	16,546	2,559
Geneve	21,686	4,006	23,497	2,092
Total	488,489	289,462	582,181	187,862

54% of the electorate went to the poll.

The Swiss Federal Assembly, or joint meeting of the two Chambers of Parliament have elected Federal-Councillor, Dr. Philip Etter, President of the Confederation.

Dr. Etter was born on December 21st, 1891, at Menzingen (Ct. Zug), he received his schooling at the "Kantonsschule" in Zug, and the "Stiftsschule" in Einsiedeln.

He studied law at the University of Zurich, and in 1917 established himself as a lawyer at Zug. Dr. Etter took a great interest in the politics of his native canton, and sat from 1917-1922 in the "Kantonsrat", and became later on (1927) a member of the cantonal government.

In the year 1930, he entered Parliament (States Council) where he soon made a name for himself as a shrewd Parliamentarian. Four years later (1934) he became a member of the Federal Government in succession to Federal Councillor Musy, who had vacated his office.

Dr. Etter occupied the Presidential chair in 1939, 1942 and 1947. In the army he held the rank of major (Infantry); he belongs to the catholic-conservative party, and is the first representative of the canton of Zug to become a member of the Federal Government.

Federal-Councillor, Rodolphe Rubattel has been elected Vice-President of the Confederation for 1953. He was born on the 4th of December, 1896, at Villarzel, in the Broye valley. On completion of his school education he studied law at the Universities of Lausanne, Paris and Vienna, and holds the degree of doctor of law of the University of Lausanne. He then took up journalism as a profession, and in turn was Editor of the "Feuille d'Avis de Montreux," "Tribune de Lausanne", "Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne", and "La Revue".

In 1939, he entered the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud as a liberal, and eleven year later (1944) he

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became a member of the cantonal government, which post he occupied up to the date of his election as a Federal Councillor. (1947).

At the beginning of the winter session, the National Council has elected Dr. Thomas Holenstein as President.

Dr. Holenstein was born in 1896 at St. Gall. He studied law at several Swiss Universities and in Rome, and afterwards established himself as a lawyer in St. Gall. Since 1936, he has been a member of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall, and since 1937, a member of the National Council.

Dr. Henri Perret, was elected Vice-President. He was born in 1885 in Le Locle, and after his University studies became a teacher. In 1914, he was appointed Director of the "Technikum" in Le Locle, and since 1933, has been Director of the "Technikum" in Neuchâtel. He entered the National Council in 1928.

Mr. Johann Schmuki, has been elected President of the States Council (Ständerat). He was born in 1890, at Uznach (Ct. St. Gall); from 1912-1925, he was employed in the Finance Department of the canton of St. Gall. Schmuki is President of the "Schweizerischen Obstverbandes", and since 1930 has been a member of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall. He entered the States Council in 1936.

M. Jean-Louis Barrelet has been elected Vice-President. He was born in 1902 at Boveresse (Ct. Neuchâtel), and held until 1914 the post of teacher at the Agricultural school in Cernier, and at the same time he edited the "Bulletin agricole Neuchâtelois". Since 1942, Barrelet has been a member of the government of the canton of Neuchâtel. He entered the States Council in 1945.

The two Federal Chambers have elected Dr. Louis Python to the post of President of the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne.

Dr. Python was born in 1893 in Bertigny near Fribourg, and is a citizen of Portalban. He studied law at the Universities of Fribourg and Paris. After a stay of some years in Paris he returned to Switzerland where he established himself as a lawyer in Fribourg. In 1931, he was elected President of the tribunal of the Saane district. He entered the Federal Tribunal in 1933.

Dr. Robert Petitmermet has been elected Vice-President of the Federal Court. He was born in 1886 at La Sagne (Ct. Neuchâtel) and is a citizen of Yverne (Ct. Vaud). He studied juris prudence at the Universities of Lausanne and Berlin.

After practising for some time as a lawyer, he was appointed assistant States Prosecutor of the canton of Vaud. (1912-1919). From 1917-1919, he was President of the District Court VII (Avenches, Payerne, Moudon and Oron), and afterwards acted as secretary to the Federal Court. In 1920, he was appointed President of the District Court II (Vevey and Lavaux), and in 1930 he entered the High Court of Justice of the canton of Vaud over which he presided in 1933. In 1934, he was elected a Federal judge.

Dr. Otto Degeller (Zurich) and Dr. Werner Stocker (Zurich) have been elected members of the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne in succession to Dr. Nägeli (Zurich) and Dr. Blocher (Basle), who have relinquished their posts.

The Federal Council has nominated Mr. Albert Cuendet to the post of Swiss Consul in Torino, in succession to Georges Brown. Mr. Cuendet was born in St. Croix (Ct. Vaud), he entered into the service of the Federal Political Department in 1923. After having been attached to several posts abroad, he was appointed in 1945, Swiss Consul at Zagreb.

The following promotions in the Consular Corps have also been announced: Mr. Louis Wachsmuth to be Vice-Consul at the Consulate in Marrakech. Mr. Wilhelm Trinler, formerly Consular Agent in Oranjestad (Aruba) to be promoted to the rank of Consul.

Sir Patrick Scrivener, British Minister in Berne has, on behalf of H.M. Queen Elisabeth presented Madame Beryl G. Schaerer-Morse with the King's Medal for Service in the cause of Freedom.

This distinction was accorded to her by the late King George VI for services rendered to British internees during the last war.

Switzerland has taken over the interests of New Zealand in Persia, and thus looks after the following countries in Teheran: Great Britain, South Africa, Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

Customs receipts during the month of November, 1952, totalled 44.6 million francs.

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Dr. rer. Pol. Josef Reichlin-Stucki, has been elected Manager of the "Kantonal Bank" Schwyz, in succession to Mr. D. Camenzind, who has resigned for reasons of health. The new Manager is 51 years old, and has been for the last 25 years in the service of the bank, since 1948, he held the post of Sub-Manager. [A.T.S.]

Professor, Dr. theol. Walther Eichrodt has been elected rector of the University of Basle for the year 1953. [A.T.S.]

Professor L. V. Furlan, has completed 40 years of service as commercial editor of the "Basler Nachrichten". [A.T.S.]

Mr. Werner Kurzmeyer, (Liberal) has been elected a member of the Government of the canton of Lucerne, in succession to Mr. Jos. Wismer, who has resigned. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Henri Parrat (Socialist) has been elected Mayor of the town of Delsberg with 985 votes, his opponent, Mr. Louis Lovis (Conservative) and former Mayor, polled 935 votes. [A.T.S.]

Early last month, a fire which broke out at the home for old people in Huttwil, nr. Trachselwald (Ct. Berne), has caused the death of five of its inmates, several others were injured. [A.T.S.]

The town of La Chaux-de-Fonds numbers 35,028 inhabitants. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Fred Krebs of Interlaken has been elected Manager of the Hotel Bellevue-Palace, in Berne.

Professor, Dr. A. Alder has been nominated rector of the University of Berne. [A.T.S.]

The "Montilier Watch Co. A.G." Montilier has recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of its foundation. [A.T.S.]

A fire which broke out at the "Deckenfabrik Stamm & Co." in Eglisau-Hüntwangen caused damage amounting to 100,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

The town of St. Gall now numbers 70,000 inhabitants. It will be remembered, that some 40 years ago the population numbered 75,000; owing to the severe crisis in the textile industry, over a number of years, the number of inhabitants was in 1941 reduced to 62,515. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Emil Zwysig (Radical) has been elected Mayor of the town of Siders. [A.T.S.]

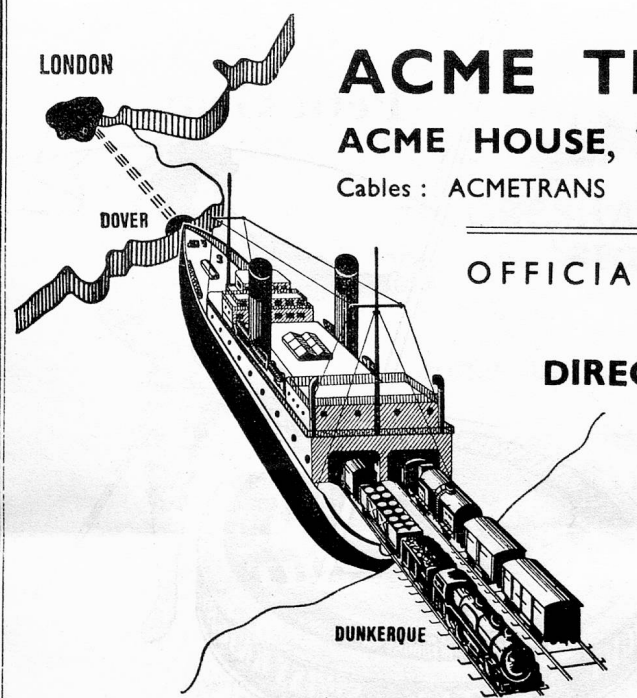
The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:

Walo Burkart, a former "Kreisförster" and an honorary citizen of Castaneda (Ct. Grisons), in Chur, aged 66.

Auguste Marguerat, Engineer, and for many years Manager of the Visp-Zermatt, and Furka-Oberalp railways, in Lausanne, at the age of 72. The University of Lausanne bestowed on him in 1943, the degree of *doctor honoris causa*.

Dr. med. Georg Fromm, veterinary surgeon of the canton of Grisons, in Chur, aged 56.

Fritz Trümpy, "Kantonsingenieur" in Glarus, at the age of 54.



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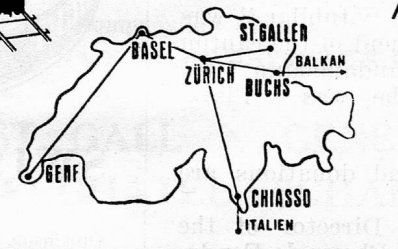
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Wilhelm Bischofsberger, from 1928-1945, a member of the Government of the canton of Appenzell I.Rh., in Appenzell, aged 74.

Dr. Adolf Im Hof, from 1915-1944, a member of the Government of the canton of Basle-Town, and afterwards a lecturer at the University of Basle, in Basle, at the age of 76.

Emil Keiser, a former teacher at the Realschule Basle, in Basle, aged 83.

Armand Fasan, architect, and for the last 15 years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud, in Rolle, at the age of 58.

Jean-Marc Cougnard, lawyer and judge, in Geneva, aged 70.

Jean de Blonay, Engineer, from 1895-1908 Manager of the "Giesserei & Emailwerke Dietrich" in Zinswiller, and from 1908-1916, a member of the Board of "Sapal, S.A." Lausanne, in Lausanne, aged 84.

Dr. Roman Boos, author, in Arlesheim, at the age of 63.

Dr. Daniel Scheurer, for over 40 years "Zivilstandsbeamter," in Basle, in Basle, aged 82.

Ernst Häberli, States Prosecutor of the "Seeland", in Bienne, at the age of 77.

Dr. August Zöllig, "Domdekan, General Vicar & Protenotar", Professor at the "Kollegium" Schwyz and rector of the "Kantonsrealschule" St. Gall, in St. Gall, aged 79.

Alois Haslimann, President of the "Zentral-schweizerischen Milchkäuferverbandes," in Lucerne, at the age of 76.

Robert Brédaz, farmer, in Lausanne, aged 60. The deceased was from 1925-1945, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud. He sat in Parliament from 1929-1933. (National Council).

Lieutenant-Colonel, Louis Jossevel, until 1938, Instructor at the "Waffenplatz" at Lausanne, in Lausanne, at the age of 75.

Dr. Louis Calame, medical practitioner, and from 1921-1928, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud. The deceased was from 1929-1951, a lecturer at the medical faculty of the University of Shanghai; he was appointed in 1938, a delegate of the International Red Cross Committee. He returned to Switzerland in 1951, and died at Yvordon aged 68. [A.T.S.]

The following anniversaries are announced in the Swiss Press:

J. V. Morger (90) Rorschach, from 1888-1931, Professor of Mathematics and from 1904 also rector of the "St. Gallischen Lehrerseminars, Mariaberg", Rorschach.

Hans Schulthess Hünerwadel (80), Zurich. Head of the printing firm "Schulthess & Co., Zurich", he was honoured by the University of Zurich in 1933, with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* for his historical research work.

Dr. Emil Rothpletz (80) Basle, author of historical works.

Rudolf Huber (70) Altdorf. The "Jubilar" was for 18 years a member of the Government of the canton of Uri, and occupied the post of "Landammann" for 4 years. During the last war he was "Platzkommandant" of Altdorf. [A.T.S.]

The undermentioned legacies and donations are reported from Switzerland:

The late Mr. Albert Monard, Director of the Natural Historical Museum of La Chaux-de-Fonds,

has left an amount of 10,000.— frs. and all his books to the Museum.

The recently deceased Jakob Baltis of Aadorf, (Ct. Thurgau) has left all his savings, amounting to 38,000.— frs. to the Evangelical church community of Aadorf.

Johann Baptist Steiger, Merchant, who died recently in St. Gall, has bequeathed a large part of his fortune to various charitable institutions, hospitals and schools. The amounts, so distributed, reach the sum of nearly 400,000.— frs.

The firm of "Adolf Feller, A.G." Horgen has made a donation of 10,000.— frs. to the "Krankenhaus" Horgen, and 3,000.— frs. to the "Kirchgemeindehaufonds" Horgen. [A.T.S.]

The following couples have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary (60) in Switzerland: Mr. & Mrs. Camille Robert, of La Chaux-de-Fonds; Mr. & Mrs. H. Marugg-Jost, of Klosters; Mr. & Mrs. J. Fischer-Furrer of Mönchaltorf (Ct. Zurich); Mr. & Mrs. Wecker-Weissmann, of Zurich. [A.T.S.]

The popularity of the Castle of Chillon, noted landmark on the Lake of Geneva, is increasing year by year. The 800-year-old castle, made famous in the English-speaking world by Byron's poem, "The Prisoner of Chillon", was visited by 134,000 people last year — 25,000 more than five years ago. Two hundred different groups were taken over what is now one of the greatest historical attractions in Europe.



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The great French painter Raoul Dufy, an exhibition of whose work ended several weeks ago, has given his celebrated "Red Violin" painting to the Geneva Art and History Museum to mark his gratitude for the way in which his work was presented to the public. In addition, Dr. Homburger, who looked after Dufy during his stay in the United States, has told the Geneva authorities that he intends to bequeath to the museum two portraits by Dufy, one of himself and the other of his wife.

The skilift at the 3,630 ft. high winter sports resort of Caux, above Montreux, has been modified. When it was opened last January it was 260 yards long and had a rise of 160 feet. Completed, it is 20 yards longer and has a rise of 250 feet. The skilift is situated at the "Haut de Caux", only a few minutes from the stations of Caux and Crêt d'y Bau, and is easily reached by the Montreux-Rochers de Naye mountain railway.

A few weeks ago, word finally reached Zurich that the Swiss Everest Expedition, led by Dr. Chevalley, had had to abandon its attempt on the world's highest mountain, when only 197 ft. from the summit.

The decision to call off the assault was taken on November 22nd. The long delay in passing the news on to Zurich was due to the difficulties in forwarding information in this wild and uninhabited region.

This is the method decided on by the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research, sponsors of the expedition, and shows how word from the men on Everest finally reached civilization. Messages are sent out by a port-

able shortwave transmitter on Everest itself and picked up at the base camp on the Khumbu glacier, and are then carried by native runner to Jaynagar, on the Indo-Nepalese frontier. From there they are forwarded to Patna, a town on the river Ganges, by ordinary Indian postal service. A Jesuit father in charge of a local school sends the messages in code from there direct to Zurich by radio. A small troupe of runners was on duty at the base camp since the assault party started on the long and wearisome climb up Everest. Every seven or ten days, one of them left for the journey to Jaynagar, 150 miles away. The route he followed took him along narrow mountain paths, over bitterly-cold snow-covered passes, across flimsy bamboo bridges thrown over gaping gorges, and along hot and dusty tracks hacked out of the jungle. A young and powerful runner knowing the country well can do the journey in ten to fifteen days, if he is lucky. In mountain country, he may cover only ten miles a day, but once he reaches the plain, he may be able to do 25 miles in a day. He travels light, with few cloths, little food, and the precious messages. And with him is his wicked-looking hunting knife, always at the ready. In those parts, you never know what might attack you.

Important alterations are being carried out at the Palais des Epositions in Geneva, home of the famous International Motor Show, to ensure that next year's show will be worthy of its ever-growing reputation. Everything will be ready for the official opening on March 5th.

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Switzerland won the annual Anglo-Swiss inter-university ski race at St. Moritz with 0 (zero) points to the British team's 10.63, in a combined score for Downhill and Slalom.

The Czechoslovakian chess master, Mr. Jacob Kottbauer, who had taken part in the Lucerne chess tournament, has informed the tournament director that he will not return to his country and will ask the Swiss Government to grant him right of asylum.

A strange phenomenon is causing some anxiety in Villard Glen, near Sonloup, 3,000ft. above Montreux. Probably because of the collapse of part of the rock

crust of an unknown underground cave a crater 45ft. in diameter and 60ft. deep has been formed in which the soil is slowly subsiding. Several small trees have already disappeared in the abyss, while a house which is showing ominous cracks has been evacuated.

Subsidence is continuing and already some 35,000 cubic feet of earth have disappeared and a small brook now falling in the hole is reappearing several yards lower on the mountain slope.

Mr. Charles Chaplin and his wife and family will move into a large house called Le Manoir, near Vevey, on the Lake of Geneva.

A Swiss expert on mechanical and textile engineering is one of three new Fellows appointed by the Textile Institute.

He is Dr. Emil Honegger, Professor of Textile Engineering to the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. Many of his papers have been published in Britain.

The Swiss National Council (Lower) House has agreed the new coinage decree passed over two years ago by the Upper House.

The decree does not introduce any fundamental changes in Swiss currency or coinage, but mainly signifies the transformation of the emergency regulations in this field into part of the Swiss legal code.

The first effect of the decree is to give the Swiss franc a fixed parity with gold, and it will be equal to 0.20322 grammes fine gold.

In place of the present 100, 20 and 10-franc pieces, the revised decree envisages the striking of two coins not hitherto seen, worth 50 and 25 Swiss francs respectively.

This does not mean, however, that the new coins will come into circulation. The authority to reintroduce gold coinage into circulation and for private firms to mint gold coinage can only be given by the Swiss Government.

The Swiss Minister of Finance explained in Parliament that it will be a long time before gold coins come into circulation again and permission is given for the free minting of new coins.

The Government will decide when the new decree is to come officially into operation. The decree provides for the new 50 and 25-franc pieces to consist of 900-thousandths gold and 100-thousandths copper in alloy. The 25-franc piece will weigh 5.645 grammes and the 50-franc piece 11.200 grammes.—

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NEW SWISS NATIONALITY ACT.

The Federal Act of 29th September, 1952 concerning acquisition and loss of Swiss nationality, came into force on the 1st January, 1953.

Two sections are of particular interest to Swiss and Swiss born living abroad.

According to section 9, a Swiss woman marrying a foreigner loses her Swiss nationality if, through the act of marriage she acquires (or already possesses) her husband's nationality and does not prior to the solemnization of such marriage declare that she wants to keep her Swiss nationality. As applied to the United Kingdom those provisions open 3 possibilities to the Swiss woman marrying a British subject:

- (1) She wants to keep her Swiss nationality and not acquire the British nationality: As under British law, the foreign woman does not acquire British nationality by the fact of the marriage itself, she can retain her Swiss nationality by doing nothing.
- (2) She wants to acquire the British nationality and to lose her Swiss nationality: on application to the Home Office for registration as a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies as the wife of such a citizen, she is entitled to the British nationality, and loses thereupon her Swiss nationality.
- (3) She wants to be a British-Swiss dual national: *If before the conclusion of the marriage, she makes a declaration to the competent Swiss authority to the effect that she wishes to remain a Swiss national, she will retain her Swiss nationality, even after having acquired the British nationality through registration.*

This last course should be followed whenever a woman wants to remain Swiss in any case, but has not made up her mind at the time of the marriage with regard to the British nationality.

A woman who already was a Swiss-British dual national before her marriage to a British subject (Swiss by descent, British by birth), will lose her Swiss nationality by marrying a man whose nationality she already possesses, *unless she makes a declaration as under a) 3.*

Section 58 provides that Swiss born wives of foreign husbands, who lost their Swiss nationality through marriage before the Act came into force, may upon their request be reinstated free of charge into their former Swiss nationality, notwithstanding the

maintenance of the marital bond. Such a request should be made to the "Département Fédéral de Justice et Police" within a year following the coming into force of the Act. Petitioners whose demeanour has impaired the interests or the good name of Switzerland, or who are obviously unworthy of such a favour, will have their request turned down.

The Swiss Legation in London and the Swiss Consulate in Manchester are competent to receive the requests. They will on application provide the forms to be filled for keeping or regaining the Swiss nationality.

MINISTER H. SCHAFFNER.

As has already been announced in the Swiss Press, the Federal Council conferred, at its meeting of 31st December, 1952, the title of Minister Plenipotentiary upon Mr. Hans Schaffner, the Delegate for Economic Agreements.

This honour is well deserved by its recipient, and it has been welcomed by the whole of the Swiss public opinion.

Mr. Schaffner was born in 1908, and hails from Gränichen, Aargau. He became a barrister, and exercised this profession for a few years in the Canton of Berne. He then joined the Administration by becoming Recorder to the Cantonal Court of Berne. His liking for economic matters later prompted him to accept the post of Secretary of the Bernese Chamber of Commerce and Industry. When war broke out in 1939 he was called to the Federal Office for Industry, Arts and Crafts, and Labour, where he immediately had to prepare war economy measures. In September 1939, he was appointed Deputy Chief of the War Economy Section, of which he was promoted Head in 1940. He certainly did a brilliant job in this capacity, until he was appointed by the Federal Council Delegate for Economic Agreements in 1946. He thus succeeded Prof. Dr. Paul Keller, who was the well-known leader of the Swiss delegation to the United Kingdom during the war years.

Since he has taken charge of the economic negotiations between Switzerland and other countries Mr. Schaffner has concluded more agreements — they exceed 90 altogether — than any other delegates. To his hunting ground belong such wide economic units as the Sterling Area, the United States, Germany, the Benelux States, the Scandinavian countries etc. The strain placed upon a negotiator who has to travel from Northern Europe to Indonesia and from India to America is enormous. Mr. Schaffner has not only preserved his physical strength, but, what is more important, his lively wit and a sense of humour which enable him to overcome even the greatest difficulties in negotiations with smiles and an easy manner.

The Swiss Colony in Great Britain are happy to see Mr. Schaffner thus honoured. They have asked themselves on many occasions what his title "Fürsprecher" could possibly mean for a negotiator, and what the authorities in other continents and countries may have thought of its significance.

The congratulations of the Swiss Colony go too to Mrs. Schaffner, who in her own quiet way has certainly also a claim to a share in Mr. Schaffner's successful career — not least because she has to put up with her husbands numerous absences from home.

