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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Belgian Minister in Berne, Vicomte de Landsheere, in a letter addressed to Monsieur Max Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, has conveyed the thanks of the Belgian Government to the Swiss people for the generous help given to the victims of the recent Flood disasters.

The departing Papal Nuncio in Berne, Mgr. Philipp Bernardini, who has been appointed secretary of the *Congregation de propaganda fide* in Rome, held a fare-well reception at the "Nuntiatur" in Berne. Amongst those who attended were: Dr. Ph. Etter, President of the Swiss Confederation, Federal Councillor, Dr. M. Feldmann, former Federal Councillors, Dr. J. Baumann, R. Minger, E. von Steiger, Minister Dr. W. Stucki, representatives of the University of Fribourg, the army and of Industry and Commerce as well as a great number of diplomats accredited to the Confederation.

Mgr. Gustavo Testa has been appointed Papal Nuncio in Berne in succession to Mgr. Bernardini, (accredited since 1935 to the Confederation).

The new Nuncio was born in 1886 at Boltiere near Bergamo. He was ordained as a priest in 1910. Since 1934, he has been titular arch-bishop of Amasea. He was formerly *en poste* in Cairo, Jerusalem and other Eastern countries.

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried during January, 1953, 17.12 million passengers, or 966.000 less than during the same period in 1952.

Goods traffic has diminished by 238,000 tons and is returned as 1.37 million tons carried. (Jan. 1952: 1.60 million tons). Receipts: 26.73 million frs. (Jan. 1952: 30.16 million frs.)

Customs receipts for the month of February, 1953, amounted to 43.4 million francs, or 0.3 million frs. more than during the same period in 1952.

Cantonal

A young man entered a grocer's shop in the Spitalstrasse Lucerne, where he purchased several articles. When the proprietress of the shop, a Mrs. Mathilde Lustenberger, turned her back to the customer in order to get some of the goods, he suddenly attacked her, trying to choke her, and also wounding her with a knife. Although badly hurt, the woman was able to call for help, upon which the aggressor decamped. He was later on arrested and identified as Pius, Gottfried Küng, of Küssnacht. (Rigi). [A.T.S.]

Four alpinists from Zurich, on the way to the Cadlimo hut above Airolo, were overtaken by a heavy blizzard, two of them were swept by the wind over the Froda precipice and killed. The names of the victims are: August Schraner, (Zurich) care-taker, aged 62, and Josef Deschmann, care-taker, aged 50. The other two, took shelter amongst some rocks where they spent the night, the next day they reached Airolo completely exhausted and suffering from frostbite. [A.T.S.]

The town of Zurich is to have a two-storey car park 35ft. below the river Limmat. Cost will be £1,250,000. [A.T.S.]

Dr. J. B. Noser (Oberurnen) a member of the Superior Court of the canton of Glarus, has tendered his resignation. [A.T.S.]

On the 6th of March 1953, 600 years ago Berne concluded an eternal alliance with the "Ur" cantons. (Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden). This historical event was duly observed in Berne, but the public festivities

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will take place in June, and will last four days. (June, 11th-14th).

The Grand Council met in solemn session at the beautifully decorated town hall, where the President of the government of the canton of Berne, Mr. Dewet Burri, in his opening address referred to the historical significance of this event.

Amongst the distinguished guests attending the sitting were noticed Federal-Councillor Feldmann (Bernese), two former Federal-Councillors hailing from the canton of Berne, namely R. Minger and E. von Steiger, and a number of high ranking military commanders under whom Bernese units are serving, headed by army-corps commander Corbat.

The first speaker was followed by the President of the Grand Council, National-Councillor, E. Studer (Burgdorf) who spoke about the creation and working of the cantonal parliament during the last 600 years.

M. R. Vuillemin, (Tramelan) Vice-President of the Council, spoke in French, reviewing the relationship between Berne and the Jura in the past; referring briefly to the separatist movement, he said, concluding his speech: "Je suis convaincu que c'est vers une entente digne de l'esprit suisse, que c'est vers un heureux et clair avenir que nous marchons ensemble, nous, citoyens de cet Etat, quelles que soient notre origine, notre langue maternelle et notre confession. Que Dieu bénisse notre canton et ses deux peuples uni! Qu'il bénisse l'alliance entre nous et tous les Confédérés! Qu'il protège notre belle et chère patrie, la Suisse! Et qu'il nous garde tous, qu'il nous procure la paix, entre nous et avec nos voisins, perpétuellement."

After the impressive Meeting at the "Rathaus" a procession, — amidst the ringing of the church bells — was formed and wended its way through the gaily decorated streets to the Minster, where a service was held, the preacher being Professor, Dr. K. Guggisberg.

The procession, which was witnessed by a large crowd, was headed by the members of the cantonal government and the Bernese Federal-Councillors, followed by the members of the Grand Council, the Bernese representatives in the Federal Chambers and Tribunals, Officers commanding Bernese units, delegations of the "Burgerrat", municipal administrations, University, churches, guilds and communes.

On the conclusion of the service at the Minster, a luncheon was held at the Kasino, at which about 900 persons attended. It was, all in all, a solemn and dignified commemoration day. [A.T.S.]

A motor-car collided in a thick fog with a lorry on the road between Neuchâtel and Bienne near the Tüscherz railway station. Two of the five passengers were killed outright, whilst the other three received

serious injuries. The names of the dead are: Walter Brechbühler, Police Director of Bienne, Werner Wyss, municipal employee, Bienne. Injured were: Paul Born, architect, owner and driver of the car, Bienne, Arthur Hirt, municipal councillor, Bienne, and Jean Depaulis, painter, Bienne. [A.T.S.]

M. Charles Guggenheim, a lawyer of Fribourg, has been appointed President of the criminal court of the town of Fribourg, and the Saane district, in succession to the late Louise Bise. [A.T.S.]

A collection made amongst catholic churches in Switzerland for the benefit of the University of Fribourg brought in 497,208.— frs. (1951: 478,563.— frs.) [A.T.S.]

Mr. Fritz Hirsig of Russy (Ct. Fribourg) was presented with the traditional easy chair by the cantonal government on the occasion of his 100th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

On December 31st, 1952, the population of the town of Fribourg numbered 29,392 which is 404 inhabitants more than at the same date in 1951. [A.T.S.]

Dr. med. vet. Ernst M. Lang, veterinary surgeon in Binningen, has been appointed Director of the Zoological Gardens in Basle, in succession to Professor H. Hediger, who has been appointed in the same capacity in Zurich. The new head of the Basle Zoo was born in 1913 at Lucerne. [A.T.S.]

As a result of the recent elections for the cantonal government of Basle Town, the following have been elected: Peter (cath. pop. party) 26,585 votes; (no change); Schaller, (radical) 26,930 votes (no change); Zschokke (liberal) 26,570 votes (no change); Zweifel, (radical) 26,766 votes (no change); Brechbühl, (socialist) 24,072 votes (no change); Ebi, (socialist) 24,485 votes (no change); Tschudi (socialist) 25,171 votes (new). 62 per cent of the electorate went to the poll (1950: 75%).

The following parties are represented in the newly elected Grand Council of Basle Town: Radicals: 25 (21); Cath. Pop. Party: 18 (16); Liberals: 15 (15); Bürger & Gewerbe party: 7 (6); Socialists: 39 (39); communists: 14 (18); Landesring (Duttweiler): 7 (10); Evangelicals: 5 (4); Freiwirtschaft: 0 (1). 130 seats.

[A.T.S.]

Mr. Emil Leibundgut (Melchnau) has been elected "Kreispostdirektor" of Basle. [A.T.S.]

The Georg Fischer A.G. Schaffhausen has made a donation of 250,000.— frs. to the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich for scientific research work. On the occasion of the 150th Jubilee of this important concern the following donations were made: Ecole d'Ingenieurs, Lausanne: 75,000.— frs.; Technikum, Winterthur: 50,000.— frs.; Cantonal Hospital, Schaffhausen: 50,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Ulrich Diem, for many years Conservator of the Arts Museum of St. Gall has resigned from his post, he is succeeded by Rudolf Hanhart (St. Gall), until recently in the service of the "Kunstmuseum", Basle. [A.T.S.]

A serious motoring accident occurred on the road between Chur and Lenzerheide when a car with three

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passengers driven by a manufacturer of Wohlen, (Aargau) skidded on trying to overtake another car, and fell down a slope. One of the passengers, a Mrs. F. Brügmann of Düsseldorf was killed instantaneously, whilst her two daughters were injured and had to be taken to the Cantonal Hospital in Chur. The driver of the car was also injured. [A.T.S.]

An explosion destroyed a ventilation plant at the Cavergno tunnel, which is under construction for the Valle Maggia hydro-electric project above Locarno. Seven workers died of suffocation in the tunnel. Fourteen others, who had been working at a distance of two miles from the entrance, were rescued, but seven of them are in a serious condition. [A.T.S.]

Madame Bambina-Galizia of Minusio (Ct. Ticino) has celebrated her 100th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

In the newly elected Grand Council of the canton of Vaud the following parties are represented: Radicals: 104; Liberals: 32; Socialists: 39; Agrarians: 8; Communists: 12; Independants: 5; Christian Socialists: 4; for 7 seats a second ballot will be necessary. Total number of the Grand Council is 211 members. [A.T.S.]

The government of the canton of Valais has been elected as follows: Anthamatten (Cons.) 20,843 votes; Schnyder (Cons.) 20,072 votes; Gard (Rad.) 21,321 votes: (all three hitherto); Gross (Cons.) 20,266 votes; Lampert (Cons.) 21,926 votes. The last two are new.

The following parties are represented in the newly

elected Grand Council of the canton of Valais; (numbering 130 members): Conservatives & Christian Socialists: 84 (91); Radicals: 25 (33); Socialists: 12 (7); Peasant Party: 9 (0). [A.T.S.]

Two German mountaineers (Elmar Duschek, of Breslau, aged 38, and W. Sieger of Köln, aged 23) together with the Swiss guide Joseph, Maria Biner, lost their lives when making an ascent of the Dufourspitze (Monte Rosa), they fell into a crevasse. The bodies of the three victims were flown to Zermatt by Hermann Geiger, a Swiss pilot who specialises in Alpine flights. [A.T.S.]

The population of the canton of Geneva on the 31st of December, 1952, numbered 210,252 or 4,799 more than at the same period in 1951. The town of Geneva, including Carouge, Chêne-Bougeries, Lancy and Vernier, has a population of 176,222. [A.T.S.]

M. René Leyvraz, editor-in-chief of the paper "Courier" which is published in Geneva, has celebrated his 30th service jubilee. [A.T.S.]

The cashier of a Tourist Agency in Geneva, (aged 40) has been arrested for embezzling 20,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Army-Corps commander Jakob Huber, from 1940-1945, Chief of the General Staff of the Swiss army. The deceased was born in 1883 at Jonen (Ct. Aargau), and was a member of the Federal Instructors Corps.

In 1931 he took over the command of the artillery brigade 5, and a year later was appointed chief-of-staff of the 3rd army-corps, and afterwards commander of the fortress St. Maurice. After having been for several years a member of the General Staff he took over the command of a division. In 1940, Colonel Huber was appointed chief of the General Staff in succession to army-corps commander Labhart, with promotion to the rank of army corps commander.

Carl, Friedrich Künzi, from 1913-1935, member of the Municipal Council of Berne, from 1922-1938, member of the Grand Council of the canton of Berne, and from 1939-1943, a member of Parliament (National Council) in Berne, at the age of 81.

Mme. Wehrle-Keckelis, President of the "Basler Katholischen Frauenbundes", and Vice-President of the Swiss Red Cross, in Basle, aged 72.

Hans von der Mühl, architect, in Basle, at the age of 65. The deceased enjoyed a great reputation as an architect, and many buildings, both public and private, were built after his plans.

Louis Goumaz, a former pastor, director of schools at Nyon, editor of the "Pays Vaudois" and Professor of theology at the University of Lausanne, in Lausanne, aged 79. The deceased was the author of a great number of works, dealing with religious and cultural subjects. In 1944, he was awarded the "Pro Helvetica" prize for his drama "La mère."

Jakob Geiger von Oberegg, for over 40 years head of the "Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei", Appenzell and since 1942 a member, and in 1945, President of the cantonal tribunal Appenzell I.Rh., in Appenzell, at the age of 72.

Gustav Bollag, well-known art dealer, composer and music publisher in Zurich, aged 79.

Pastor Carl Irlet, for many years protestant preacher in Solothurn Baden and Berne, in Twann at the aged of 74. Pastor Irlet was honoured by the University of Debrecen (Hungary), with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* for his philanthropic work for needy Hungarian children.

Dr. Arnold Bollag, lawyer, for many years President of the Board of the Municipal Works of Baden, and a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Aargau, in Baden, aged 76.

Albert Maire, from 1915-1951, President of the "Service d'escrime neuchâtelois et jurassien" of which he was the founder. The deceased was for many years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel. He died in Neuchâtel at the age of 80.

Maurice Buiard, from 1913-1918, President of the commune of Lutry (Ct. Vaud), from 1905-1918, member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud, and from 1918-1942, a member of the cantonal government. He sat in Parliament (National Council) from 1922-1935. The deceased was President of the Swiss Liberal Party, he died at Lausanne, aged 82.

Jean Humbert, since 1933, a member of the government of the canton of Neuchâtel, in Neuchâtel at the age of 64. He sat in Parliament (National Council) from 1940-1946.

Dr. Stephan Brunies, for 34 years a teacher at the "Realgymnasium" Basle, in Basle, aged 76.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The undermentioned Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for 1952: Bank Leu & Cie, Zurich : 6

per cent (1951 : 6%); Neue Guyerzeller-Bank, A.G. Zurich : 5 per cent, (1951 : 5%); Gewerbebank Zurich : 5 per cent; Freiburger Hypothekarkasse : 5 per cent.

[A.T.S.]

* * * Here are some balances of the accounts for 1952 of the following cantons :

St. Gall *Credit* Balance 1,790,545.— frs. Appenzell A.Rh. *Credit* Balance 137,675.— frs. Glarus *Debit* Balance 39,180.— frs. Lucerne *Debit* Balance 118,116.— frs. [A.T.S.]

* * * The following anniversaries are mentioned in the Swiss Press :

Dr. Eugen Meyer-Peter (70) since 1920 Professor of hydraulic water structure at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich. In 1933 he was honoured with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* by the University of Zurich.

Professor Georges Hochreutiner (80) for many years head of the Botanical Gardens of the town of Geneva. [A.T.S.]

* * * Further donations for the victims of the Flood disasters in Great Britain, Holland and Belgium are published in Switzerland; namely Government of the canton of Fribourg; 5,000.— frs; Government of the canton of Appenzell, I.Rh.: 1,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

* * * The Swiss Federal Railways have sent a modern ornamental wall clock of superb craftsmanship as a gift to Indian Railways on the occasion of the Indian Railway Centenary on April 16. The clock was presented at a ceremony in New Delhi on March 6 by Dr. Max Graessli, Swiss Minister in India, and was received by Mr. O. V. Alagesan, Deputy Minister for Railways & Transport, on behalf of Indian Railways. The Swiss Minister expressed the admiration of Switzerland, and particularly of the Swiss Federal Railways, for the remarkable progress made by Indian railways during the last century. The Deputy Railway Minister, reciprocating the sentiments expressed by the Swiss envoy, added that India considered the gift as a token of the friendship and affection in which she was held by Switzerland.

* * * Provisional figures for 1952 show Federal Railways passenger receipts at fr. 300,441,000, some 10 per cent higher than for 1951, and goods receipts



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(including also baggage, mail, and express parcels) at fr. 372,792,000, a drop of 3 per cent. Total receipts for 1952 were fr. 733,458,000 (against fr. 715,483,118 for the preceding year) and total working expenditure fr. 519,847,000 (fr. 501,112,402). The working surplus for 1952 therefore was very slightly lower than for 1951.

The decline in freight receipts is attributed to a contraction in imports and to road competition and to a drop in coal traffic in transit from Germany to Italy, though fruit and vegetable transit traffic from Italy and Spain increased. The rise in working expenses was due to increased material prices and staff expenditure.

* * *

The presence and exploitation of oil deposits in Switzerland were the subject of a question in the National Council or Second Chamber of the Swiss Parliament. The Government replied that the matter was being carefully examined by them though experimental borings so far had been fruitless. Drillings made in various regions — namely, in cantons Vaud, Fribourg, Lucerne, Ticino, gave no decisive results except in Ticino, where one boring was now supplying small quantities of methane, and in Canton Vaud, near Yverdon, where a drilling carried to a depth of over 4,000ft. struck small deposits of oil very inferior in quality.

* * *

A return of cold weather, with snow again covering the lower regions of central and eastern Switzerland, has made the fate of thousands of migratory birds, already arrived from southern countries, precarious. The Swiss ornithological centre at Sempach has broadcast an appeal to the public to feed, in particular, the thrushes, starlings, larks, and various sorts of waders, as these birds cannot find their usual food.

* * *

British and Italian ice hockey players fought with fists and sticks on the rink of the Hallen Stadium in Zurich during the final match of the unofficial European junior championships. Play was interrupted for five minutes.

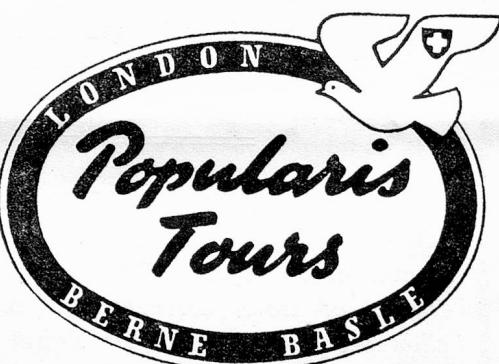
Policemen went on to the ice, wearing boots, but had difficulty in keeping their feet. When play resumed both teams had two men in the penalty box. The Italians won 3-0.

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SWISSAIR OUTPUT IN 1952.

In 1952, the total returns of Swissair have risen to 67.5 million francs. Compared with 58.3 million francs in the previous year, this represents a 16% increase. This increase of total returns is, however, off-set by considerable additional expenditure, as a result of the increased cost of material and personnel. More than 3 million francs have been spent in 1952 for training purposes. In view of the expected delivery of three additional long-distance aircraft, it was necessary for Swissair to set aside large sums in advance.

The tendency of a certain stabilising in the rise of traffic, which can be clearly seen from last year's aviation statistics, could also be confirmed within Swissair. In comparison with the very rapid development in previous years, our national airline has shown a slight slackening of transport results in 1952. It can even be stated that the figures for flown kilometers dropped by 1.5%. This can be explained as being due to flying difficulties, caused by the American oil strike in May and June last year, the cancelling of flights on certain routes in Europe and Persian Gulf territory, as well as a considerable shortage of crews. However, thanks to the operation of larger aircraft, the offered kilometers could be increased from 34.3 million in 1951 to 38.1 million, or an increase of 11.2%. There has also been considerable progress in all other traffic and business results. There has been an increase of 9.3% in freight transport, 35.6% in mail, and 3.8% in transported passengers. The comparatively small increase in passengers transport can be explained by the decrease of the travel allowance for English tourists, and to the reduced number of lines to the Near East, due to the political situation there. The distribution of ton/kilometers rendered on the three Swissair networks, Europe, Near East and U.S.A. shows that the oversea flights to New York result in nearly one third of the total transport performance of Swissair. The total, therefore, is divided as follows :

Europe	55%	
America	32%	
Near East	13%	
Statistics.		
	1952	1951
Flown kilometers	... 10,385,562	10,541,470
Offered tons/km.	... 38,155,884	34,309,959
Transported Passenger	... 292,341	281,748

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