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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

The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur Otto Seifert, at present Minister to Israeli, to the post of Swiss Minister to Indonesia, in succession to M. René Naville, who has been transferred to Chile.

Minister Seifert was born in Wartau (Ct. St. Gall) in 1902. After having occupied posts in industrial concerns in Spain and Italy he entered the service of the Federal Political Department (Foreign Office) in 1934. He was attached successively to the Swiss Legations in Rome, Madrid and Budapest. In 1948, M. Seifert was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation and transferred to the Legation in Vienna.

* * *

The traditional dinner given by the Federal Council to the Diplomatic Corps took place in Berne, and was attended by all Ambassadors and Ministers accredited to the Confederation and their principal collaborators. Amongst those who were present was Monsieur R. Rubattel, President of the Swiss Confederation and four Federal Councillors, representatives of the various International Buro's and high government officials.

* * *

Customs receipts for the month of January, 1954, amounted to 44.8 million francs, or 2.3 million francs more than in January, 1953.

* * *

Brigade-Colonel Ernst Gross, born 1892, commander of the 10th Mountain Brigade, and a member of the Instructor Corps, has been nominated Chief of the Swiss Delegation of the NNSC in Korea, in succession to Division-Colonel Wacker.

Cantonal

Mr. Alois Müller, Manager of the "Urner Kantonalbank" will shortly retire from his post. He has been in the service of the Bank for the last 50 years.

[A.T.S.]

Dr. h.c. Alfred Ganz, of Horw (Ct. Lucerne), Industrialist, has celebrated his golden wedding anniversary. Born at Mainz (Germany) he has been a resident and citizen of Horw since 1918. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. Bonaventura Jten of Unterägeri, has been elected a Member of the Government of the canton of Zug. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. Arnold Seematter, since 1934 a member of the Government of the canton of Berne will shortly retire from his post. [A.T.S.]

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In 1953, 3,114 Traffic accidents were reported in the canton of Fribourg. 265 persons were injured of whom 11 succumbed to their injuries. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Eduard Collomb, a member of the Editorial Staff of the paper "La Liberté", Fribourg, has celebrated 25 years of service. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The British Ambassador, Sir Lionel Lamb, has paid a visit to the Rhine Port in Basle. He was accompanied by the British Consul, Mr. A. A. E. Franklin. The Government of the canton of Basle-Town entertained the distinguished visitor to a dinner which was attended by the *élite* of the town of Basle. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Kantonsschule" of Grisons is celebrating this year its 150th Jubilee, it numbers at present 700 pupils. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A serious accident occurred in Frick (Ct. Aargau) when a motor-car ran into a couple of pedestrians.

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Mr. Z. Wasser-Jauch, aged 20, of Oeschgen and his wife, aged 22, were killed outright. They leave a child nine months old. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Owing to re-building operations this year's "Fierra Svizzera" in Lugano will not take place. [A.T.S.]

* * *

4,598 traffic accidents have been reported in the canton of Vaud during the year 1953. 2,160 persons were injured of whom 74 died from the injuries. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The British Ambassador, Sir Lionel Lamb, has paid an official visit, to the Government of the canton Geneva. The Minister of the Republic of Israeli, Monsieur Samuel Tolkowsky has paid a visit to M. Charles Duboule, President of the Government of the canton of Geneva. [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Paul Dinichert, Swiss Minister to Germany from 1932-1938, in Geneva, aged 75. He was born in 1878, and educated in Paris, and after entering the Swiss Diplomatic Service was appointed Minister to Argentine and Uruguay in 1915. During 1918-19, he was the Director of the Foreign Interest Division and of the Internment Service of the Federal Political Department, and from 1920-1932 he was the Director of the Federal Division for Foreign Affairs. In 1929, he was President of the Red Cross conference which drew up the Geneva convention for the relief of the sick and wounded in war. After being Minister to Germany from 1932-1938 he was, from 1938 until 1946, Minister to Sweden, being also accredited to Norway and Denmark. He was a member of the Control Committee of the Austrian Reconstruction Loan, and a member of the Board of the Swiss Red Cross.

Professor Joseph Piller, in Cormanon, (Ct. Fribourg), aged 64.

The deceased was born in 1890 at Fribourg. In 1918, he was appointed Professor of law at the University of Fribourg, eight years later (1926), he was elected a member of the Federal Supreme Court, Lausanne, a post which he held until 1932, when he entered the Government of the canton of Fribourg, from which appointment he retired in 1946. Professor Piller was a member of the States Council from 1935-1947, and again from 1950 until his death.

Dr. Max Dorer, from 1908-1917 a member of the "Kantonsrat" Solothurn, and from 1929-1941 a member of the Superior Court of the town of Solothurn, in Grenchen at the age of 77.

Professor Paul Reinbold, from 1922-1945, Professor of Medicine at the University of Lausanne, in Lausanne, age 79.

Rudolf Cuendet, formerly Manager of the S.A. Gardy, Geneva, in Geneva, aged 62.

Professor Arnold Dillier, a teacher at the "Kollegium Karl Borromäus", Altdorf and for 39 years Editor of the "Uerner Wochenblattes" in Altdorf, at the age of 72.

Dr. Franz Jacob, formerly Manager, and a member of the Board of the "Schweiz. Sodafabrik", Basle, in Basle at the age of 71.

Louis von Balthasar, Civil-Engineer, and from 1915-1940, Manager of the "Aargauischen Elektrizitätswerk", Aarau, in Lucerne, at the age of 79.

Dr. Gustave Riat, formerly President of the parish of Delsberg, in Delsberg, aged 72.

Aimé Barraud, a well-known painter, in Neuchâtel, at the age of 72.

Dr. Fritz Wenk, since 1920 a member of the Grand Council of the canton Basle-Town, and Central President of the "Schweizerischen Stenographischen Vereins", in Basle, at the age of 66.

Luigi Biasca, Geometer, in Muralto, aged 59.

Jean-Remy Christen, Vice-President of the Grand Council of the canton of Geneva, in Geneva, at the age of 44.

Dr. August Cuenod, for long well-known ophthalmologist specialising in the treatment of trachoma, at Hammamet, Tunisia,, at the age of 85. A native of Vevey, he had lived for more than 50 years in Tunisia. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The undermentioned anniversaries are published in the Swiss Press:

Fritz Ringwald (80) of Lucerne, Vice-President and a member of the Board of the "Centralschweizerischen Kraftwerke". He was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne from 1919-1943.

Dr. h.c. Alois Muri (75), of Tann (Ct. Lucerne) from 1943-1945, General Manager of the PTT administration.

States-Councillor Hans Fricker (75), of Aarau.

Arnold Huggler (60) of Brienz, a well-known sculptor. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Here are some balances of the accounts for 1953 of the following cantons:

Zurich: Credit Balance 9,303,887.— frs.;
Aargau: Credit Balance: 1,164,567.— frs. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1953: Schweiz. Bankgesell-

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schaft, Zurich: 8 per cent (1952: 8%); Schweiz. Volksbank, Berne: 5 per cent, (1952: 5%); Hypothekarkasse des Kantons Bern: 4½ per cent; Banque Nationale Suisse: Net profit, Frs. 5.8 million francs; Dividend 6 per cent (1952: 6%). Fiduciary issue at Frs. 5,228m. represents new high gold stocks advanced by Frs. 210m. to Frs. 6,086m, of which Frs. 4,000m. deposited abroad. Foreign exchange holdings rose by 31m. frs. to 522m. frs. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The undermentioned Legacies and Donations are published in the Swiss Press:

The late Dr. G. Bruckner, pharmaceutical chemist of Spiez (Ct. Berne) has left two amounts of 13,500.— frs. each, to the parish of Spiez and to the "Asyl Gottesgnad", Spiez.

The heirs of the late Federal Councillor Dr. Albert Meyer, an honorary citizen of Fällanden (Ct. Zurich), have made a donation of 20,000.— to the parish to be used for charitable purposes.

The late Mr. Otto Schödler, Master Plumber, of Villigen (Ct. Aargau) has left an amount of 35,000.— frs. to various charitable institutions.

Mlle. Elise Tobler of Thal (St. Gall) has bequeathed an amount of 11,000.— frs. to the parish of Thal to be used for charitable purposes. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Swiss Red Cross announces that the collection made in Switzerland for the Swiss and Austrian avalanche victims has so far reached the amount of 563,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A first report on the results of experimental television transmissions by the Swiss broadcasting authorities (General-Direktion PTT,) suggests that interest on the part of the public has not been very great. Doubtless this is because of the somewhat restricted programmes sent out by the experimental transmitter at Uetliberg, near Zurich, amounting to one hour only in the evenings of five days a week, as

well as the general expectation that colour television will shortly be on the market.

At the end of November, 1953, there were only about 300 to 400 subscribers, whereas some 100,000, on a fee of Frs. 60 each, would be needed to cover the cost of a reasonable programme. The competent authorities are somewhat concerned therefore as to the future of the experimental service, since the credit originally granted will soon be exhausted.

On the other hand, a proposal has been put forward for the establishment of an organisation, capitalised at Fr. 100,000, to develop television in Geneva by equipping a TV centre at Mon-Répos which would operate in addition to any eventual local transmitter.

* * *

According to a decree passed in 1909, the sale of dogs and cats for human consumption was prohibited in Switzerland. Some of the cantons, however, asked for concessions, and in 1938 a decree was issued allowing certain cantons to sell the flesh of dogs and cats with certain restrictions, and only in their own territory, most of the cantons did not make use of this concession.

The Federal Council has now, as previously, prohibited the commerce with dogs and cats for culinary purposes throughout Switzerland. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A report published by the Swiss Federal Railways states that a great many travellers on the national network do not pay full rates. Only about 34% of train travellers (both from abroad and resident in the country) really pay full tariff — that is to say, only a little over one-third of Swiss train passengers. A very high percentage of season tickets at reduced rates are issued and, on the whole, therefore, Swiss railway travel is not so expensive as people say.

* * *

Swiss exhibition of Agriculture 1954.

It has been learnt that the Swiss National Exhibition of Agriculture, which is to take place in Lucerne from the 16th September to the 11th October, 1954, will occupy a superficial area of 200,000 square metres. It will bring together thirty-five professional groups, for, in addition to agriculture proper, the Exhibition will also comprise sylviculture, aboriculture, game preserves and fishing. Its organisers have set for themselves the aim of drawing attention to the importance of agriculture in Switzerland's economy.

Needless to say, that the dairy industry will occupy a prominent position. The public will be shown, in a plastical and suggestive form, what considerable efforts have been made in order to improve the quality of the milk supplied to consumers. It will be possible to see the functioning of a dairy, equipped with the most modern plant and with the indispensable laboratory, as well as an urban butter distributing centre, and, also, that very latest discovery of science, a plant for the "uperisation" of milk. A special exhibition will show the public all the principal kinds of cheese manufactured in Switzerland.

Nouvelle Société Helvétique (LONDON GROUP)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

and

ANNUAL DINNER

Tuesday, March 16th, 1954, at 6.15 p.m.

at the

"Schweizerbund" 74, Charlotte Street, W.1.

7.15 Reception

7.30 Dinner

Tickets at 10/6 incl. coffee should be obtained in advance from the Hon. Secretary, Miss A. Gretener, 49, Putney Hill, London, S.W.15. Applications accompanied by remittance should reach her by March 12th.

All Swiss and Friends are invited.