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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

Monsieur Enrico Celio, Swiss Minister in Rome, having reached retiring age, will shortly vacate his post.

The Federal Council has designed as his successor, Dr. Alfred Escher, at present Head of the Swiss Delegation of the Neutral International Commission for the exchange of prisoners of war in Korea.

Minister A. Escher was born in 1906, and hails from Zurich, he studied law at the Universities of Zurich, Kiel and Berlin, and in 1928 obtained his doctorate. He entered into the service of the Federal Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office) in 1931, and was sent to London and afterwards to the Swiss Consulate in Bangkok. In 1935, he was transferred to Warsaw and four years later (1939) to Berlin.

In 1941, M. Escher went to Ankara with the rank of 1st Secretary of Legation, the following year he was appointed Consul in Bagdad and from there he went to Athens, where he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation.

He was transferred to London in 1945, as 1st Counsellor of Legation, and in 1948, the International Committee of the Red Cross appointed M. Escher as commissioner in connection with the help for refugees in Palestine, he was at the disposal of the Red Cross Committee until the 22nd of June, 1951, when he was appointed Swiss Minister in Iran, being at the same time accredited to Afghanistan. (Minister Escher, whilst in London, was frequently seen in the Colony.)

* * *

The Finance Commission of the two Chambers (National and States Council) is studying the question of an increased remuneration for Federal Councillors; the salary of a Federal Councillor was fixed in 1947 to be 48,000.—frs., in addition a yearly amount of 70,000.—frs. was made available for the entertainment expenses of the seven Councillors.

It is proposed to increase the salary of a member of the Government from 48,000.—frs. to 55,000.—frs.

The Soviet Government has asked Switzerland to look after their interests in the Kingdom of Irak, the Federal Council has accepted the mission.

* * *

The Italian Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Egidio Reale, who has occupied his post since 1947, has been recalled to Rome. He will be succeeded by Monsieur Maurilio Coppini. The new Ambassador was born in 1900. He has held various posts in Moscow, Belgrade, Helsinki and Vienna, and from 1948-1950, he was Italian Consul General at Zurich.

* * *

The accounts for the year 1954, of the Federal Post, Telegraph and Telephone Administration close with a surplus of 64.4 million francs. (1953: 53 million francs.)

* * *

The Federal Department of Justice and Police in Berne, stated that the Munich Police have arrested a German alleged to have driven gunmen from Germany to Switzerland to attack the Rumanian Legation in Berne last month. The arrest was made at the request of the Swiss, they said.

The Swiss Police also mention that the four gunmen, now under arrest, were born in Rumania, but their full identity may not yet have been definitely established. The Police say they confiscated two sub-machine guns, one German revolver, one German automatic pistol, two small pocket pistols, several knives and daggers, and 158 rounds of ammunition.

* * *

The two Federal Chambers met on March 14th for their Spring session in Berne, which will last between 2 - 3 weeks.

Cantonal

Professor, Dr. G. Miescher, Professor of Dermatology at the University of Zurich, has been honoured with the title of *doctor honoris causa* by the University of Munich. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The French Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Denney paid a two days' visit to the town of Zurich, during which he inspected the Kloten Air Port, the cantonal hospital, the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), and the "Kunsthaus". The distinguished guest was offered a dinner by the municipal authorities. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Schweizerische Depeschenagentur" in Berne, has celebrated its 60th foundation anniversary. Monsieur M. Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation, spoke on Radio Lausanne about this event, extending the congratulations of the Government to the Management. [A.T.S.]