

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1955)

Heft: 1251

Rubrik: News at random

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Advisory Council: R. DE CINTRA (Chairman); O. F. BOEHRINGER, LS. CHAPUIS, J. EUSEBIO, GOTTFRIED KELLER, R. J. KELLER, R. PFENNINGER, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

EDITED BY A. STAUFFER WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE SWISS COLONY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 2321/2.

Published Twice Monthly at 23, LEONARD STREET, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

Vol. 40 No. 1251.

FRIDAY, MAY, 27th, 1955.

PRICE 11D.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has announced the suspension of the Director-General of Customs (Oberzolldirektor) Ernst Widmer, pending an inquiry into suspicions of irregular activities. The Chief of the Federal Finance Department has sent the findings of a "disciplinary investigation" to the Attorney General so that he may establish whether there are grounds for opening penal proceedings.

* * *

Dr. Ernst Wyss, Director of the Federal Tax Administration has tendered his resignation to the Federal Council for reasons of health, he has occupied this post since 1953.

* * *

Monsieur M. Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation has sent a telegram of congratulations to the President of the Italian Republic on his election as Head of the State.

* * *

The members of the Diplomatic Corps in Berne have entertained the members of the Federal Council to a dinner. No speeches were made.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 16.93 million passengers during the month of March, 1955, or 570,000 less than in the same period in 1954. Receipts: 22.91 million francs (March, 1954: 23.69 million francs).

Goods traffic has increased by 244,000 tons, and is returned as 1.90 million tons. Receipts: 35.30 million francs (March, 1954: 34.32 million francs).

* * *

The Federal Council has remitted an amount of 20,000.—frs. to the Swiss Red Cross in aid of the earthquake victims in Volos (Greece).

* * *

The Swiss Government has informed Parliament that membership of the Neutral Nations Commissions in Korea had so far cost the country 5,500,000 francs

(about £458,000) and the belligerents did not intend to pay back any of it.

In a 100-page report on Korea, the Government said: "There is no doubt that the mission offered to us in Korea gave us the opportunity to prove that neutrality can still serve the cause of peace through co-operation in peaceful international tasks, even though they may be thankless, difficult, and fraught with risks".

* * *

Details have been issued in Berne of a revised Bill giving the Federal Government exceptional powers for the economic defence of the country in the event of war being imminent. It displaces earlier drafts — that of 1952 which was criticized as too authoritarian and centralizing, and that of 1954 which was condemned as too timorous.

The new draft has 41 articles, and is accompanied by an explanatory message running to 64 pages. It starts from the premise that a nation's capacity to resist aggression depends not only on its armed forces

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but also on its economic resources. Among other things, it empowers the Government to build up stocks, to control prices, and to regulate exports and imports. The Government points out that in the three years during which the Bill has been in preparation, armistices were concluded in Korea and Indo-China, but adds that prospects of a lasting peace have hardly improved this year.

The cold war, with its unpredictable alternations of tension and brief relaxation, was subjecting the nation to a hard test. "Fear," the Government says, "gives way to apathy, and *vice versa*". It is therefore more than ever necessary that purposefulness and perspicacity should be the guiding qualities of governmental policy."

The Swiss Federal Military Department is issuing a guide to all citizen-soldiers on elementary facts about atomic warfare.

The 16-page manual contains a basic description of atomic weapons, their effects, possibilities of protection against them and measures to take after an explosion.

The Swiss Government has refused an entry visa to Alexandroff, the Russian cinema director, who was coming to Switzerland to hand the 1954 Stalin Prize to M. André Bonnard, Professor of Greek at Lausanne University. M. Bonnard was given a suspended sentence of 15 days' imprisonment for espionage two years ago.

The Swiss Government has launched an intensive campaign to stop men joining the French Foreign Legion, whose Swiss strength numbers between 1,000 and 2,000.

Some 200 men leave Switzerland every year to enrol at the Legion's grim barracks in Marseilles. Thus the Swiss Citizen-Army is deprived of roughly two battalions of troops.

Only partial success has resulted from Swiss efforts to get France to help limit the enrolment of Swiss legionnaires, particularly miners.

Cantonal

Sir Winston Churchill has presented Mr. Willy Sax, artist's colour manufacturer, of Zurich with his painting "Bridge at Aix-en-Provence". [A.T.S.]

The Manageress of the non-alcoholic restaurant Baumacker, in Zurich was attacked by a not yet identified man; she received serious head injuries. The aggressor got away with the contents of the safe amounting to 4,500.—frs. [A.T.S.]

The "Glarner Landsgemeinde" took place in Glarus on the 1st of this month. Amongst the official visitors were the members of the Government of the canton of Valais *in corpore*, Brigade-Colonel Niggli and Mr. A. Wichser, General-Manager of the Swiss Federal Railways.

Mr. Franz Landolt (Socialist) of Näfels was elected as "Landesstatthalter" replacing Dr. Rudolf Schmid (Liberal). Mr. Walter Spälti of Matt (Liberal) was elected as a new member of the cantonal Government. The post of "Landammann" is held by Dr. Heinrich Heer. [A.T.S.]

Figures just published by the Federal Statistical Office in Berne in connection with the census taken

on the 1st of December, 1950, show that the population of the canton Basle-Town numbered 196,498 inhabitants (90,239 males and 106,259 females). Basle: 183,543 inhabitants, Riehen: 12,402 and Bettingen: 553. [A.T.S.]

Dr. E. Handschin, Professor of Ethnology at the University of Basle, and Director of the Natural Historical Museum has been elected an Honorary Member of the "Société Royale d'Entomologie de Belgique". [A.T.S.]

The accounts for 1954 of the canton of Schaffhausen close with a *credit* balance of 28,244.—frs. [A.T.S.]

The annual Delegates Meeting of the Schweiz. Kaufmännischer Verein" took place at St. Gall. 225 Delegates were present. This Society numbers 130 sections with 55,700 members. [A.T.S.]

The Rev. Johann B. Ackermann (Rebstein-Rheintal) has celebrated his 60th Jubilee as a priest. He was for 40 years priest in Rebstein. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Arnold Rüdinger, Head of the "Kunsthalle" Berne has been elected Conservator of the "Basler-Kunstverein", in succession to Dr. Robert Stoll, who has vacated his office. [A.T.S.]

The cantonal Parliament of Berne passed a Bill giving each commune in the area the power to give votes to women, but only on strictly communal matters. [A.T.S.]

The French Consul-General in Lausanne, M. A. Rialland, who has held the post for the last three years has been transferred to a post in South America. [A.T.S.]

The writer Gustave Roud of Carrouge (Ct. Vaud) has been awarded the literature prize of the Vaudois Writers Association. [A.T.S.]

Mme. Emilie Vuichoud-Girard, widow of M. Vuichot, notary, Montreux, has celebrated her 101st birthday. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Hermann Geiger, the well-known mountain rescue pilot has been nominated Head of the Airport Sierre-Chateauf. [A.T.S.]



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The French Ambassador in Berne, has paid a courtesy visit to the Government of the canton of Valais. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Roger Bonvin, consulting-engineer, has been elected Mayor of the town of Sierre. He is a member of the Conservative Party. M. Joseph Maxit (Radical), Monthey, has been elected President of the Grand Council of the canton of Valais. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Claude Berger (Neuchâtel) a lawyer, and member of the Conseil Général of the canton of Neuchâtel, is entering the National Council in succession to the late M. Henri Perret. The new National Councillor belongs to the Socialist party. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Jean-Pierre Blaser (La Chaux-de-Fonds) has been nominated Director of the Neuchâtel Observatory, in succession to M. Edmond Guyot, who has resigned. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Albert Brochon, Farmer of Thierrens (Ct. Neuchâtel) is succeeding M. Samuel Roulet, who has resigned his seat in the National Council. The new National Councillor sat formerly in this Council for a period of four years. [A.T.S.]

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. med. Guy von Wyttenbach, Surgeon-in-chief of the District Hospital, Obersimmenthal, Zweisimmen, at the age of 64.

Karl Schmid, Editor of the "Freien Aargauers", and since 1929, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Aargau, in Aarau.

Canon J. E. Hagen, Editor of the papers "Wächter" and "Maiengrüsse aus Einsiedeln", in Frauenfeld, aged 91.

Professor, Dr. med. Scherb, "Privatdozent" at the University of Zurich, and from 1919-1950, Director of the Orthopaedic Clinic, Balgrist, in Zollikon (Zurich), at the age of 76.

Friederich Wuest-Fries, formerly a school inspector, in Lucerne, aged 82.

Dr. Henry Flournoy, since 1920 a lecturer at the medical faculty of the University of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 69.

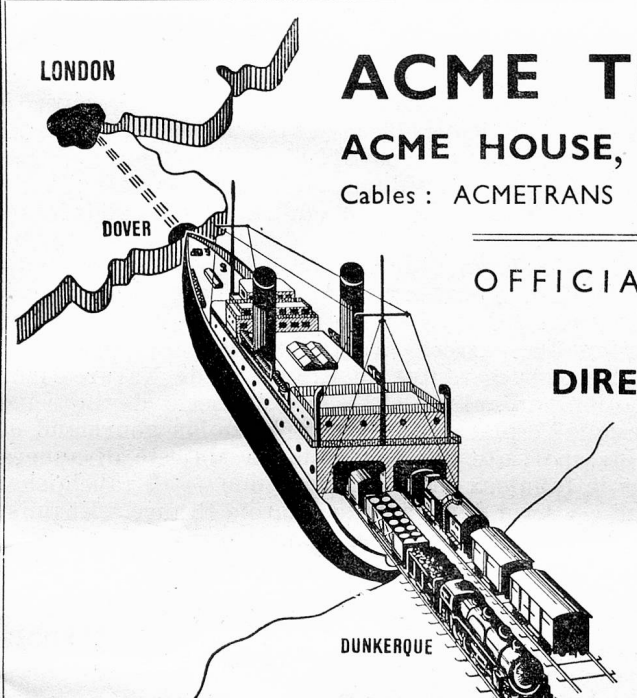
Ettore Brenni, well-known Industrialist, in Mendrisio, at the age of 71. [A.T.S.]

ANNIVERSARIES

Max Stoffel (60) of St. Gall. Proprietor and Head of the textile firm Stoffel & Co., in St. Gall. President of the "Verbandes Schweiz. Garnhändler & Gewebe-Exporteure" and member of the "Kaufmännischen Direktoriums", St. Gall, and Swiss Chamber of Commerce.

Hermann Flückiger (70), of Bienne. He was the first Swiss Minister in Moscow after the last war, when he relinquished the command of the 3rd Division.

Adolf Remy (60) of Fribourg. Editor-in-chief of the paper "Nouvelles Fribourgeoises", and a member of the Board of the "Agence Télégraphique Suisse".



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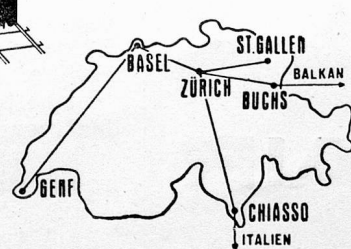
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He was at one time in command of a Fribourgeois regiment and holds the rank of Colonel.

Gotthold Wernli (70) of Basle, a former well-known gymnast and wrestler. In 1911, he was declared "Eidgenössischer Schwingerkönig". [A.T.S.]

* * *

LEGACIES.

The late Dr. phil. Emil Bindschedler (Winterthur) of Philadelphia (U.S.A.) has legated the amount of 196,670,000.—frs. to the University of Zurich.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. Niederberger-Detolo of Altdorf, Mr. and Mrs. H. Blöchliger-Treichler of Rapperswil, Mr. and Mrs. R. Honegger-Suter of Hinwil (Zurich), Mr. and Mrs. Joh. Jermann-Glettig of Uzwil, Mr. and Mrs. U. Stüdli-Meier of Egg, Mr. and Mrs. A. Mathis-Studer of Winterthur. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Professor William E. Rappard will resign in October as Director of the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva.

Professor Rappard (71) was born in New York, and founded the Institute in 1928. He will be succeeded as Director by Professor Jacques Fréymond of Lausanne University. The Institute is designed to give students from all over the world a broader and more intimate view of diplomacy and International politics.

* * *

The next Federal Shooting Competition will be held in Bienne, in 1958. [A.T.S.]

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Paris au printemps est la plus douce, la plus charmante et la plus coquette des capitales. Les premiers beaux jours revenus donnent à cette ville de rêve des couleurs qui inspireraient le plus médiocre des peintres du dimanche. Des Champs-Élysées à la Place St. Michel, de Pigalle et de sa rue qui monte vers le plaisir au Palais-Royal de Mme Colette et de Cocteau, Paris, avec ses quartiers riches par leur diversité et leur physionomie éblouissante, demeure la reine et la plus désirable des capitales. Capitale de l'esprit, des belles lettres, de tous les arts; capitale de la bonne vie, de la gastronomie la plus raffinée, de la dive bouteille; capitale de la volupté, de toutes les voluptés, du coût de la vie le plus élevé après New-York. On aime Paris. On ne peut éprouver que des sentiments pour Londres. Remarque qui ne m'est pas personnelle: elle est de M. Cyril Connolly.

L'esprit de Paris, bien différent de l'humour londonien, s'étale publiquement ici et là. On le cueille comme une belle fleur, et certains mêmes le glissent à leur boutonnière à la manière d'un oeillet d'Oscar Wilde. Il est possible d'établir une comparaison, même un rapprochement, entre un Fernandel et un Norman Wisdom. Mais l'esprit de Paris est, lui, incomparable. Dans ces petits théâtres que l'on appelle les chansonniers, et qui grimpent eux aussi comme la rue Pigalle vers la Butte Montmartre, les professionnels de l'esprit font oublier chaque soir à un public venu pour cela les monotones réalités de la vie quotidienne. Robert Rocca, en voyant dans le film "Du rififi chez les hommes" quatre bandits occupés à perforer le plafond d'une banque, a eu ce mot: "Au fond, dans le gangstérisme, c'est comme dans les autres métiers, le tout c'est d'arriver à percer!" Les jeunes fantaisistes Poirer et Serrault ont, par ailleurs, constaté judicieusement: "Les incendies éclatent la plupart du temps parce qu'il n'y a pas de cendriers dans les endroits où il est interdit de fumer".

L'art de la guenle trouve dans Paris une consécration de chaque instant. On souhaite, poliment mais fermement, que les restaurateurs de Londres et d'Angleterre passent la Manche cet été pour aller parfaire sur les routes de France et de Navarre leur éducation culinaire. A la "Rôtisserie de la reine Pédauque", place St. Lazare, le moins gourmand et le plus spartiate des sujets de Sa Majesté divaguera après le fabuleux menu bourguignon — et rabelaisien — qui est servi dans la salle Anatole France. Et puis, la bonne cuisine peut aller de pair avec la distraction frivole. Au haut de la rue Lepic, où Henri Bordeaux situa l'un de ses romans, le restaurant "Belles et Buttes" offre non seulement un échantillon de bonne cuisine, mais encore un exemple de bonne fantaisie. Et dans une petite salle aménagée de façon très particulière, les dames, pour aller s'asseoir sur la banquette, doivent passer par-dessus les tables. Sous les regards très intéressés des hommes. Et alors qu'un guitariste chante en jouant des chansons grivoises comme au bon vieux temps du roi Henri.

* * *

A travers les vertes campagnes du Northamptonshire, on arrive à Silverstone, dont le circuit fameux