

News at random

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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 Dr. Agostino Soldati to the post of Permanent Observer to the United Nations in New York, with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary. He is succeeding Minister August Lindt, who has been nominated United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Minister Soldati was born in 1910 and is a citizen of Neggio (Ct. Ticino). He entered the service of the Federal Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office) in 1938 and successively occupied posts at the Swiss Legations in Rome, Berlin, Lisbon and Paris. In 1951 he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation.

As reported in our last issue, the appointment of Minister Dr. Auguste Lindt as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has been confirmed.

Minister Lindt was born at Berne in 1903 and studied law at the Universities of Geneva and Berne. From 1927 to 1940 he was special correspondent of several European newspapers. He served in the Swiss army from 1940 to 1945, and afterwards was appointed special delegate of the "Don Suisse" in Berlin.

Dr. Lindt was Press Attaché and later Press Counsellor at the Swiss Legation in London from 1946 to 1948. In the latter year he became Switzerland's representative on the Executive Board of UNICEF and, in 1953, was appointed the Executive Board's Chairman.

Counsellor of Legation Dr. René Keller, head of the Information and Press Service at the Federal Political Department in Berne, has been transferred to the Swiss Legation in Paris in the capacity of 1st Counsellor.

Dr. Keller was born in Paris in 1914 and spent the first five years of his life there. From 1919 to 1939 he lived at Geneva where in 1933 he matriculated. Then followed one year at Cambridge University

(Trinity College) where he studied law. In 1937 he became *Licencié en droit* of the Geneva University and a year later he was a *stagiaire* at the Dresdner Bank in Berlin, where he specialised on documentary credits which later became the theme of his dissertation. At the outbreak of the last war he joined his unit (heavy artillery) as lieutenant, and after his release from his regiment he entered the service of the Federal Political Department in Berne, having in the meantime acquired the degree of Doctor of Law at the Geneva University.

At the beginning of 1941 Dr. Keller was transferred to Prague as Vice-Consul, returning in 1945 to Berne where he occupied a post in the administrative section of the Federal Political Department with the rank of 2nd Secretary of Legation. A year later (1946) he was sent to the Swiss Legation at The Hague where he remained until September 1950, when he joined the Swiss Legation in London with the rank of 1st Secretary of Legation. In 1954 Dr. Keller was appointed head of the Information and Press Service at the Federal Political Department with the rank of Counsellor of Legation.

The President of the Swiss Confederation, Dr. H. Streuli, has sent a telegram of condolence to the Austrian Chancellor on the occasion of the death of the President of the Austrian Republic, Dr. Theodor Koerner.

The Swiss Government has ordered the Federal Attorney's office to conduct a full investigation into Swiss arms purchases.

CITY SWISS CLUB

Will members kindly note that the next

MONTHLY MEETING

will take place on **Tuesday, February 12th, 1957**, at **6.30 p.m.** for **7 p.m.** at the **Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1 (Stanhope Room).**

The Dinner will be followed by a game of Jass, Bridge or Canasta.

Members wishing to be present should send their card to the Manager of the Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, to reach him not later than Monday, February 11th, 1957.

THE COMMITTEE.

The Federal Attorney's office is to investigate illegal profits having been obtained by third parties on war material procured by the Federal Military Department, and whether such people are liable for legal penalties. Colonel Ryser, Military and Air Attaché at Washington, has been recalled to help investigations.

* * *

The following representatives of the Confederation on the Board of "Swissair" have been re-elected for the period of 1957 to 1959: Professor Eduard Amstutz, President of EMPA Zurich; Dr. Ed. Weber, General Manager of the PTT administration Berne; and Dr. Hugo Gschwind, President of the General Direction of the Swiss Federal Railways, Berne.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Parliament has approved the grant of an emergency credit for improving and reinforcing the armament of the army and air force. The total sought was 279 million francs, but Parliament granted only 179 million francs reserving its decision on the proposal to spend 100 million francs on the purchase of new fighters, pending further study of the question. The credit voted includes 100 million frs. for buying 100 Centurian tanks from Britain.

* * *

An agreement in which the United States undertakes to sell uranium to Switzerland and to communicate to her certain methods that the Americans have perfected was approved by Parliament.

* * *

The Federal Council has re-elected the following members of the Board of the Swiss Federal Railways for 1957 to 1959: National-Councillor Robert Bratschi, Manager of the Berne-Loetschberg-Simplon railway; National-Councillor Walter Bringolf, Mayor of the town of Schaffhausen; O. de Chastonay, Manager of the Cantonal Bank, Sion; Dr. jur. Gion Darms; States-Councillor Dr. jur. Max Gafner, Member of the Government of the canton of Berne; States-Councillor V. Gautier, Banker; J. Guyer, Manager of the Chocolate Works Maestrani; Dr. jur. H. Herold, Secretary of the "Vorort des Schweiz. Handels & Industrievereins"; Dr. sc.tech. E. Jaggi, Director of the "Schweiz. Bauernverbandes"; States-Councillor L. von Moos; Gino Nessi, Manager of the "Banca popolare di Lugano"; Gaston Schelling, President of the commune of La Chaux-de-Fonds; Dr. R. Stadler, Member of the Board of the "S.A. des cableries et trefileries de Cossonay"; Dr. Rudolf Speich, President of the Schweiz. Bankverein.

Dr. R. Stadler has been elected President of the Board.

* * *

Minister Robert Kohli, "Direktionspräsident der Schweiz. Verrechnungsstelle", has tendered his resignation. He is returning to the Federal Political Department in Berne.

* * *

Talks for a new trade agreement between Britain and Switzerland will open in Berne at the end of this month. It has been agreed provisionally to prolong for three months the existing agreement, signed on January 28th, 1956, and due to expire on December 31st, 1956.

* * *

Mr. Hans Marti has been nominated Vice-Director of the Commercial Division of the Federal Economic

Department. He is succeeding Dr. Probst, who has held this post for the last 22 years, and who is vacating his appointment on reaching retiring age.

Mr. Marti (48) is a citizen of Aarwangen and Berne. He studied law at the Universities of Geneva, Leipzig and Berne. After practising for two years as a lawyer in Geneva he entered the service of the Commercial Division in 1935.

* * *

Monsieur Dimitru Olteanu, the newly appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Rumania, has presented his credentials to the President of the Swiss Confederation at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

* * *

The Federal Council has appointed Mr. Henri Giron to the post of Swiss Consul in Rosario in succession to Mr. Paul Born who has vacated his post on retirement.

Consul Giron, who has been since 1914 in the service of the Confederation, was born in 1895, and is a citizen of Geneva.

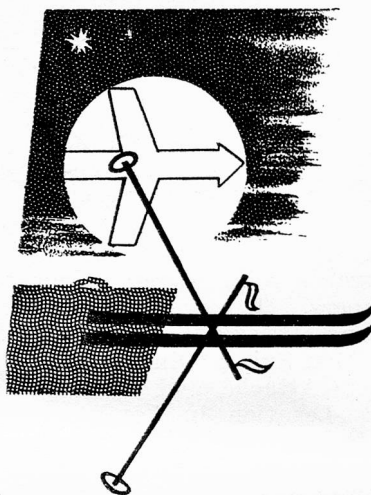
* * *

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 16.7 million passengers in the month of November, 1956, or 100,000 more than in November, 1955. Receipts, 22.2 million frs. (Nov., 1955: 22.1 million frs.)

Goods traffic is returned as 2.27 million tons, or 190,000 tons more than during the same period in 1955. Receipts: 43.0 million frs. (Nov. 1955: 40.2 million frs.)

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Mr. Oscar Joerg, since 1948 Honorary Swiss Consul in Tientsin (China), has tendered his resignation.

Dr. Bernardo Zanetti (Poschiavo) has been elected Vice-Director of the "Bundesamts für Industrie, Gewerbe & Arbeit". (BIGA).

Cantonal

The well-known Restaurant "Fischerstube", in Zurich, a building which remained standing from the 1939 "Landesaustellung", has been completely destroyed by fire. The damage is estimated to exceed 300,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

Three persons were killed and three seriously injured when two motor-cars collided at the "Industriestrasse" in Schlieren. The following received fatal injuries: Alfred Engisch (62) and his wife, of Zurich; Alfred Ammann (38), Merchant, of Urdorf. The latter's wife and two children were seriously injured and had to be taken to hospital.

[A.T.S.]

Mr. Klemenz Meienberg (Socialist), since 1947 a member of the Government of the canton of Zug, has been elected "Landammann" for 1957/58; Dr. Emil Steiner (Conservative) was elected as "Statthalter"; Mr. Fritz Jost (Socialist) was elected President of the "Kantonsrat", Zug, and Jakob Grob (Conservative) Vice-President. [A.T.S.]

The collection made by the paper "Der Bund" in Berne for the help of Hungarian Refugees has already exceeded 100,000.— frs. The collection still goes on. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Aurele Ritter (51), station-master at Vendlincourt, was run over by a train and killed.

[A.T.S.]

An express train coming from Lucerne collided with a stationary goods train at the Wylerfeld station near Berne. No lives were lost, but the damage caused is estimated to be considerable.

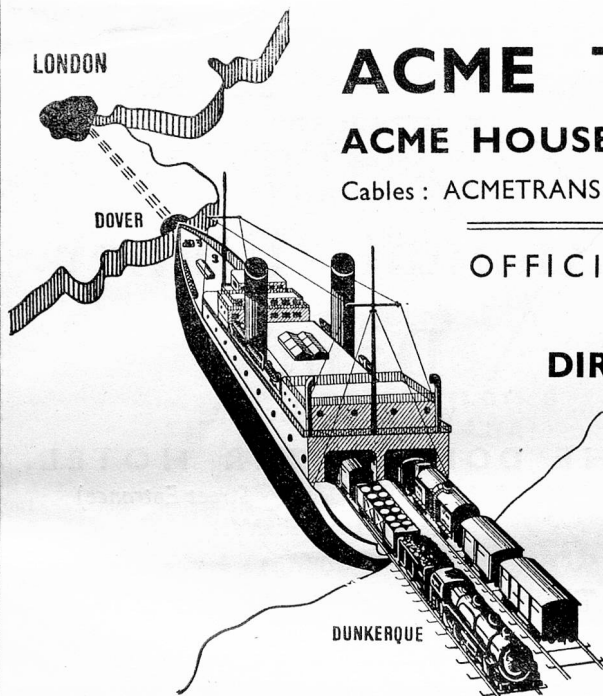
[A.T.S.]

The oldest citizen of the commune of Schöngau (Hochdorf district), Mme. K. Brunner-Furrer, has died at the "Friedheim" Home for old people, at the age of 99. [A.T.S.]

Mr. G. Dreyer has been appointed Manager of the cantonal and municipal railways of Fribourg in succession to M. X. Remy. [A.T.S.]

Dr. jur. Reinhold Schudel (Neuhausen) has been elected "Staatsschreiber" of the canton of Schaffhausen. [A.T.S.]

The military tribunal of the 7th Division has sentenced a young man who for conscientious reasons refused to do military service to four months' imprisonment. He had already, in 1955, been sentenced to four months' imprisonment for the same reason. [A.T.S.]



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766 traffic accidents occurred in the canton of Thurgau during the year 1956. 744 persons were injured, of whom 37 succumbed to their injuries.

[A.T.S.]

* * *
Two persons were killed on the Monte Ceneri road (Ct. Ticino) when a motor-cycle collided with a lorry. The names of the victims are: Vittorino Notari of Vezzia (20) and Miss Pia Gamboni (21).

[A.T.S.]

* * *
The commune of Morcote (Ct. Ticino) has nominated Mr. Plinio Bolla, a former Federal judge, an honorary citizen. [A.T.S.]

* * *
M. Pierre Oguey has been nominated President of the Government of the canton of Vaud for 1957. M. Alfred Oulevay will be Vice-President. [A.T.S.]

* * *
The town of Neuchâtel numbered 30,886 inhabitants on 31st December, 1956. [A.T.S.]

* * *
A smash and grab raid took place at a jewellery shop in the de Chantepoulet road in Geneva. Goods to the value of 15,000.— frs. were stolen. [A.T.S.]

* * *
M. Edouard Debetaz, notary and President of the commune of Yvonand (Ct. Vaud), has entered the National Council in succession to M. Samuel Chevalley, who has resigned. M. Debetaz belongs to the Radical party. [A.T.S.]

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Robert Walser, in Herisau, at the age of 79. The deceased was well known as a writer; amongst his best-known works were the novels "Geschwister Tanner", "Der Gehülfe", and "Jakob von Gunten", and his "Dichtungen in Prosa".

Josef Kurmann, since March 1956 Chargé d'Affaires *ad. int.* at Bangkok and formerly Swiss Consul in Hongkong, in Peang (Malacca) on his return journey to Switzerland.

Professor Dr. Oskar Müller, since 1924 head of the Dental Institute of the University of Basle, in Basle, aged 70.

Alfred Tschudy, from 1908 to 1932 a member of the Government of the canton of Glarus, in Schwanden, at the age of 96.

Hermann Jacobi, piano manufacturer, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Berne, and President of the Board of the "Schweiz. Mobiliar-versicherungsgesellschaft", in Berne, aged 69.

E. Rehm, architect, in Basle, at the age of 70.

Daniel Ledermann, architect and secretary of the "Confrérie des vignerons", in Vevey, aged 67.

Charles Marcel Chabloz, a lawyer and notary, in Le Locle, at the age of 60.

Pierre Girard, writer and for many years a collaborator of the "Journal de Genève", at the age of 64.

Albert Malche, a former member of the Government of the canton of Geneva, and for 20 years a member of the States Council, in Geneva, aged 80.

Robert Schiess, well-known portrait and landscape painter, in Ishia, at the age of 61.

Charles Meuvly, since 1946 a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, in Fribourg, aged 73.

H. Werenfels, Manager of the "Aktienbrauerei" Basle, in Basle, at the age of 67.

Adolf Forster, Proprietor of the "Hirschen Apotheke", Solothurn, in Solothurn, aged 71. The deceased held the rank of Lieut.-Colonel in the army. He was from 1934 to 1944 "Platzkommandant" of the town of Solothurn.

Dr. Josephus Meile, R.C. Bishop, in St. Gall, at the age of 66.

Alfred Vauthier, for several years President of the commune of Dombresson (Ct. Neuchâtel), in Dombresson, aged 71. From 1928 to 1953 M. Vauthier was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel.

Joh. Baptist Amrein, for 42 years a preacher at Romanshorn, and an Honorary Canon, in Romanshorn, at the age of 84.

Luigi Tosi, for 37 years conductor of the municipal brass band of Bellinzona, in Bellinzona, aged 76.

Colonel Louis Clerc, of the General Staff, at Neuchâtel, at the age of 69. [A.T.S.]

LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.

The late Otto Fischer-Bertschinger of Wildegg (Ct. Aargau), of the firm "Hellmühle Wildegg, A.G.", has left the amount of 34,000.— frs. to charitable institutions.

Mme. Georges Blanpan of Fribourg, who has recently died, left the sum of 42,000.— frs to the Protestant community of Fribourg.

Eduard Blank, a resident in Montreal (Canada), has made a donation of 11,000.— frs to his home town Schaffhausen for charitable purposes.

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The heirs of the late Mr. George Zuppinger, of Schaffhausen, have donated the amount of 12,000.— frs. to the "Heilanstalt" of Breitenau.

The late Mme. Beatrice Meyerhans-Baumgartner of Weinfelden has left the sum of 26,800.— frs. for charitable purposes. The firm of "Meyerhans & Co. A.G.", in memory of Mrs. Meyerhans, has also donated the amount of 32,000.— frs. to the "Fürsorgefonds" of the personnel of the firm. [A.T.S.]

ANNIVERSARIES

Anton von Deschwanden-Niderberger (80) of Stans, a former member of the Government of the canton of Nidwalden, and a member of the Superior Court of the canton of Nidwalden. [A.T.S.]

DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. & Mrs. W. Walz-Stocker of Waedenswil. [A.T.S.]

VARIOUS.

The "Circolo Commerciale Svizzero" at Milano, which is a section of the "Schweiz. Kaufmännischen Verein", has recently celebrated its 50th Jubilee. [A.T.S.]

The personnel of the Federal Customs Administration have collected an amount of over 80,000.— frs. for the Hungarian refugees. [A.T.S.]

The collection for Hungarian refugees made by the Swiss Red Cross up to December 22nd, 1956, has reached 6 million francs. [A.T.S.]

The drama company of the Zurich "Schauspielhaus" has been invited to take part, in 1957, at the Edinburgh Festival.

The National Council (Lower House of the Swiss Federal Parliament) has approved an atomic co-operation agreement with the U.S. under which Switzerland will receive 500 kilograms of uranium fuel.

Ratification of the agreement, signed last June by the two Governments, was authorised by 126 votes to four, with a number of abstentions. The Council of States (Upper House) had approved the agreement previously. — (Reuter.)

The Swiss passenger boat Basilea, with 28 double cabins and space for 12 cars, will come into service between Basle and Rotterdam as from April of this year.

Its voyages, beginning on Saturdays every other week, will take three days down-stream from Basle to Rotterdam and five days back.

Outside the tourist season, the Basilea can carry 400 tons of cargo, her specially shallow draught enabling her to sail even when the Rhine falls very low. — (Reuter.)

A record number of 12,800,207 people visited Swiss hotels, boarding houses and rest houses last summer.

The Swiss Government is to contribute £4,375,000 towards the £15,000,000 cost of modernizing and enlarging Zurich's Kloten international airport.

The Union of Helvetia, the organisation of Swiss hotel staffs, has agreed to a standardised system of tipping — referred to as service charges — which will figure on all hotel bills from April 1, 1957.

A charge of 15 per cent. will be added to the bill for stays of one or two nights, and 12 per cent. for three or more nights. This fee will be credited in full to the hotel employees. Guests may give extra at their discretion to reward services outside the daily routine.

Coaches more than 7ft. 4½in wide have been banned from the Orsieres-Grand St. Bernard road by the Swiss Federal authorities. Formerly the ban existed for local vehicles only, coaches from foreign countries being allowed to be up to 8ft. 2½in wide.

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The Swiss Federal Government is studying a proposal to give nearly £2,000 to a league to fight against the enrolment of Swiss citizens in the French Foreign Legion.

* * *

The Cape Town City Council have awarded the Oerlikon Engineering Company of Zurich, a contract for two 30,000 Kw turbo-alternators. The price quoted was £393,165 as against the British firm's quotation (C. A. Parsons and Co., Ltd), whose tender was for £511,800.

Parsons' equipment is already installed in the Table Bay power station.

* * *

Swiss Hotels.

There are stories circulating in Great Britain to the effect that Swiss Hotels will not be heated adequately this coming Winter Season, owing to a shortage of fuel.

We are officially advised by the Swiss Hotel-keepers Association that these rumours are entirely without foundation. All Hotels will be well heated as usual and therefore be comfortable and cosy throughout the Winter.

* * *

The Time-Table Robot.

A new automatic time-table in the Main Railway Station at Zurich can be consulted for information on any destination within Switzerland. All you have to do is to look the place up in the alphabetical list, drop a 20 centimes coin into a key-numbered slot and pick up a sheet from the official train-schedule, popping out of the machine complete with useful particulars on train connections between Zurich and the place in question, restaurants and hotels there, as well as a special "bon voyage" surprise — a crossword puzzle. The Swiss Federal Railways intend to put up more timetable robots in other important railway stations throughout Switzerland.

* * *

New Model Hotels and Motels in Switzerland.

A joint-stock company has recently been founded under the auspices of the Touring Club of Switzerland in order to promote the construction of three "model

hotels" which are to feature special "motel" facilities. One will be built on the outskirts of Geneva, another one at Vira-Cambarogno on Lake Maggiore, and the third near Ragaz Spa. Moreover negotiations are in progress between the TCS and Swiss hotels with regard to the realization of another three-motel project. These three motels, although designed by TCS experts, will be built entirely at the cost of the Swiss hoteliers.

* * *

Some 650 years ago, the town of Altdorf was the alleged home of Switzerland's legendary national hero, William Tell. Last summer Schiller's drama "Wilhelm Tell" was performed here by local players seventeen times, and each performance at the Tell Playhouse, which is now equipped with a modern revolving stage, was completely sold out. Encouraged by this success, the Altdorf Tell Play Society has just decided to stage another Tell festival this summer.

* * *

Hints of no less than 684 Sports Meetings, cultural and social events, exhibitions and other important highlights of the Swiss winter season ending April 30, 1957, are contained in the booklet "Winter in Switzerland 1956/7" which has just come off the press in three separate editions (English, French and German). Published by the Swiss National Tourist Office, it also features original sketches by Hans Wullschleger. The last two of its 31 pages are devoted to a short preview of 55 outstanding events of the 1957 Swiss summer season.

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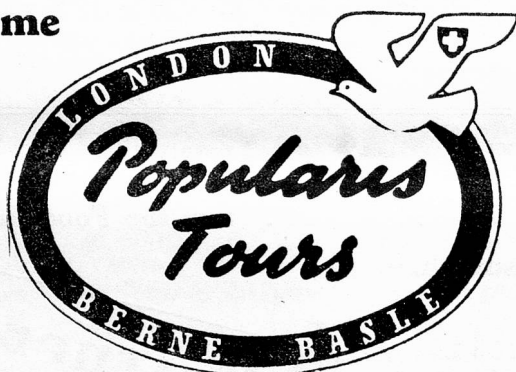
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