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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

Switzerland's all-male electorate rejected by a 270,288 majority a proposal to insert a clause in the Federal Constitution to guarantee a standard 44-hour working week in industry from 1960. (The usual working week is 48 hours.) About 61 per cent of the electorate polled. Here are particulars of the voting.

CANTONS	YES	NO
Zurich ...	92,094	95,445
Berne ...	39,292	100,051
Lucerne ...	11,912	32,154
Uri ...	1,549	4,361
Schwyz ...	2,887	10,300
Obwalden ...	442	3,526
Nidwalden ...	798	3,220
Glarus ...	2,408	5,186
Zug ...	2,764	5,656
Fribourg ...	3,425	19,407
Solothurn ...	12,988	23,127
Basle Town ...	20,115	15,120
Basle Country ...	10,173	13,476
Schaffhausen ...	6,758	7,531
Appenzell A. Rh.	1,848	7,853
Appenzell I.Rh.	193	1,922
St. Gall ...	16,927	45,671
Grisons ...	5,410	19,145
Aargau ...	24,316	50,690
Thurgau ...	8,251	24,399
Ticino ...	9,313	11,219
Vaud ...	15,018	40,204
Valais ...	5,353	16,603
Neuchâtel ...	8,369	13,938
Genève ...	13,307	15,984
Total	315,910	586,188

* * *

The Federal Council has decided to pay back — without conversion — the 3½ per cent loan issued by the Confederation, amounting to 300 million francs, which became due on 1st November 1958.

The Swiss Federal Government has sent to Parliament a request for a credit of 284 million francs (nearly £23,500,000) to be expended on defence construction needed under the 1951 programme of reorganisation.

* * *

The Federal Council has submitted to the Federal Chambers a draft Budget for 1959 showing a modest surplus, but the biggest defence credits ever proposed in peacetime.

With a £1 million surplus of receipts over expenditure (the latter totals nearly £200 million) the Budget provides about £80 million for defence. The 1958 Budget allocated less than £75 million for the purpose. Defence credits proposed for 1959 cover only conventional armaments.

* * *

Mr. Walter Spycher, Swiss Consul-General at Amsterdam, has vacated his post on reaching retiring age.

* * *

Cantonal The municipal council of Zurich has awarded the "Hans Georg Naegeli" medal to the following composers and conductors: Paul Müller, Robert F. Denzler, Hans Lavater, Hermann Hoffmann. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Nordostschweizerische Verband für Schifffahrt Rhein-Bodensee" and the "Association Suisse pour la navigation du Rhône au Rhin" have both celebrated the 50th anniversary of their foundation. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The 250th anniversary of the birth of the Bernese biologist, physiologist and writer, Albrecht von Haller, has been celebrated by the University of Berne.

Xmas Greetings

Following former years' practice we propose to publish again in our December issue a collective greeting.

The high costs of Xmas cards, should induce many of our subscribers to make use of this facility to extend to their friends the compliments of the season.

Those of our readers and friends wishing to be included should forward name and address to our office not later than Friday, November 21st, 1958, together with remittance for 10/-.

The rector of the University, Professor Dr. Albert E. Rueti, in his memorial address referred to the work of this eminent scientist and man of letters.

Amongst the numerous audience were Federal Councillor Markus Feldmann, and former Federal Councillors E. von Steiger and Max Weber. [A.T.S.]

During the month of September 1958, 593 traffic accidents occurred in the canton of Berne. 531 persons were injured, of whom 11 succumbed to their injuries. [A.T.S.]

The hospital in Delémont (Jura Bernois), which was renovated at a cost of 2,948,000.— francs, has recently been inaugurated. [A.T.S.]

The cantonal school of Porrentruy has celebrated its 100th jubilee. [A.T.S.]

Frau Lina Beck-Pflugshaupt has celebrated her 100th birthday in Kirchbühl near Burgdorf. [A.T.S.]

Two masked bandits entered the post office of Belfaux (Ct. Fribourg) and threatened the postmaster, Hayoz, and his wife, with a revolver, demanding the key of the safe from which they took an amount of 12,000.— francs; after which they decamped by car. [A.T.S.]

The 20 million francs loan recently issued by the canton of Basle Town at 3½ per cent has been considerably over-subscribed, and allocations had to be reduced. [A.T.S.]

The British Ambassador in Berne, Sir William Horace Montagu-Pollock, has visited the town of Basle. He was received by the cantonal authorities, who offered him a luncheon at the " Wildsche Haus ".

The distinguished guest visited chemical works and the Port of Basle. [A.T.S.]

A cable railway has been opened recently above Zermatt. It leads from the Gornergrat (10,289 feet) to the Stockhorn (11,594 feet) and its two sections are altogether 9,600 feet long. It will be used mainly by skiers, for whom it opens the higher snowfields of the upper Findelen and Gorner glaciers, and also facilitates the ascent of Monte Rosa, which will be accomplished in a day. [A.T.S.]

The " Taschentücherfabrik Albin Breitenmoser A.G." Appenzell has been completely destroyed by fire. The damage caused is estimated to amount to several million francs. Over 200 employees have lost their jobs. [A.T.S.]

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The Government of the canton of Basle Town has decided to earmark an amount of 10,000.— francs annually for scientific research work. [A.T.S.]

The commercial manager of the " Ateliers Théâtres " in Berne has been arrested for embezzling an amount of 40,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

The OLMA fair (Schweiz. Messe für Land- und Milchwirtschaft), which was held at St. Gall, has closed its doors; about 200,000 visitors had passed through the turnstiles. [A.T.S.]

The town of Rapperswil (Ct. St. Gall) has bestowed upon Ferdinand Fuerer and his wife honorary citizenship. Mr. Fuerer was formerly " Stadtammann " of Rapperswil, and President of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall. He has rendered eminent services to the town and commune for the last fifty years. [A.T.S.]



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The commune of Bottigkofen (Ct. Thurgau) has honoured Mr. Jakob Greuter "Ortsvorsteher" with honorary citizenship for the many services he has rendered. Mr. Greuter was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Thurgau from 1941 to 1956.

[A.T.S.]

Professor Th. Heuss, President of the West German Federal Republic, has honoured the Swiss Professor Dr. Werner Beck, author and scientist, now residing in Losone (Ct. Ticino), with the "Verdienstkreuz" of the German Republic on the occasion of his 65th birthday. The town of Frankfurt a./M. has awarded Professor Beck the "Goethe Plakette".

[A.T.S.]

On Tuesday, 21st October, General Guisan, Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss Army during the last war, celebrated his 84th birthday. [A.T.S.]

A bookkeeper of a Vaudois credit concern has been arrested for embezzling over 100,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

A chauffeur, of Geneva, was sentenced to 45 days' imprisonment for driving a car whilst under the influence of alcohol. He had previously been fined for a similar offence. [A.T.S.]

The Canadian Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Edmond Turcotte, has paid a visit to the Canadian pupils of the "Junior College" at the commercial school in Neuchâtel. (The college has about 80 Canadian pupils of both sexes.)

The school authorities offered a dinner to the Ambassador, which was attended by M. Gaston Clottu, a member of the cantonal Government. [A.T.S.]

The Polish Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Josef Koszutski, has paid a courtesy visit to the Government of the canton of Neuchâtel. He was received by M. B. A. Leuba, President. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Prize of the "Geneva authors", amounting to 3,000.— francs, has been awarded to the Genevese writer, Jean Hercourt, for his work "Le monde que vous voyez". [A.T.S.]

* * *

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Aldo Canova, consulting engineer, Vice-President of the commune of Bellinzona, in Bellinzona, at the age of 43.

Adolf Daetwyler-Gamma, Head of the "Daetwyler, A.G., Schweiz. Drahtkabel- und Gummiwerke" Altdorf, in Altdorf, aged 76. The deceased was a member of the "Landrat" Uri from 1934 to 1947.

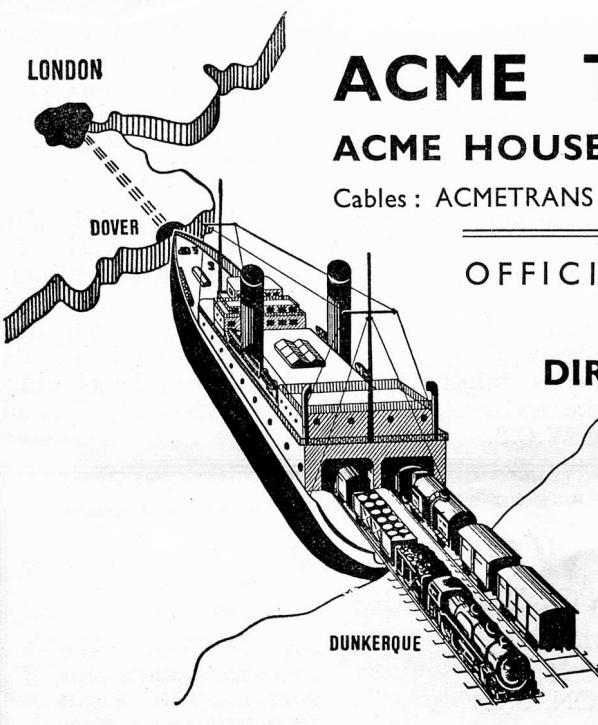
Georg Meier, since 1935, "Kapellmeister" of the municipal theatre Berne, in Berne, at the age of 54.

Professor Charly Clere, in Près-sur-Enges, aged 76. He was a former Professor of French Literature at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich. The deceased was a prolific writer, amongst his best-known works being "Le génie du lieu", "Portrait de Philippe Bridel", and "L'âme d'un pays".

Dr. Heinrich Droz, a former editor of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", in Zurich, at the age of 69.

Dr. sc.techn. Edgar Gretener, in Zurich, aged 57.

Dr. Konrad Habicht, a former teacher of physics and mathematics at the "Kantonsschule" Schaffhausen, in Schaffhausen, at the age of 82.



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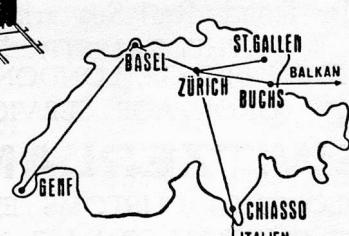
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Edy Petrolini, district judge of Mendrisio, and a former member of the Grand Council of the canton of Ticino, in Mendrisio, aged 52.

Carlo Censi, advocate, in Lugano, at the age of 86. From 1900 to 1930 the deceased played an important role in the political life of the canton Ticino. He was at one time a member of the National Council, the Grand Council of the canton Ticino, and Mayor of the town of Lugano. [A.T.S.]

* * *

ANNIVERSARIES.

Dr. jur. Cony Staehelin (70), of Zurich, President of the "Verkehrsverein" Zurich for the last twenty-five years.

August Aegerter (80), of Basle, the well-known landscape painter and etcher. He was formerly a teacher at the "Staatlichen Kunstscole in Dresden".

Josef Wiss-Staeheli (80), of Horgen, writer and dramatist. [A.T.S.]

* * *

ARMY.

Captain Fritz Genner (44), of Dübendorf, father of three children, crashed with a Venom plane, in the neighbourhood of St. Stephan (Simmental), and was killed.

A Swiss military mission, headed by divisional Colonel Waibel, "Waffenchef" of the Infantry, has, on an invitation of the West German War Office, visited the German army manoeuvres and various military establishments.

A delegation of high-ranking American officers have arrived in Switzerland. They are visiting a number of military establishments. [A.T.S.]

* * *

LEGACIES.

The recently deceased Ernst Graf, master cooper, of Naenikon, has left the amount of 21,500.— francs to various charitable institutions. [A.T.S.]

* * *

DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Müller-Wirth, of Herisau; Mr. and Mrs. K. Schneider-Sutter, of Basle; Mr. and Mrs. E. Buffat, of La Tour-de-Peilz.

The following have celebrated their iron wedding anniversaries (65): Mr. and Mrs. J. Burkhardt-Geissbühler, of Staefa; Mr. and Mrs. O. Elmer-Ingold, of Basle; Mr. and Mrs. Ch. Balsiger-Wüthrich, of Muensingen. [A.T.S.]

* * *

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

Traffic accidents in Switzerland are still alarmingly on the increase.

Two persons were killed when a motor-car crashed into a brick wall at Saxon. (Ct. Valais).

Mr. Kaspar Thomann (35), of Maienfeld, fell off his motor-cycle near Bad Ragaz and received fatal injuries.

Motor-cyclist Georges Bachmann (20), of Le Locle, collided with a lorry on the road between Les Eplatures and La Chaux-de-Fonds and was killed.

Mr. Kurt Heinz Byffeler (23), of Langenthal, was involved in a collision with a cart and lost his life.

Mr. Paul Bodois (67), a farmer, of Cottens (Ct. Fribourg), was run over by a motor-car near the village of Rose and was killed.

Mr. Michel Eggen (20), of Zurich, attending the artillery "Rekrutenschule" at Sax, was killed when his car crashed into a tree near Gams.

Mr. Armin Suter (18), of Zurich, collided with a motor-car at the Winterthurer Strasse in Zurich and lost his life.

Motor-cyclist Andreas Rüedi (45), of Tamins, collided with a jeep near Plankins. He was killed, and his daughter, who was a passenger, was seriously injured.

Mr. Erwin Flütsch (20), a mechanic, of Lucerne, was killed when his motor-cycle collided with a lorry near Schiers. [A.T.S.]

* * *

VARIOUS.

The interest of sport fans all round the world will be focused on St. Moritz, the "Metropolis of Winter Sports" of the Engadine, next February. No less than three dramatic world championships will take place there in the coming season, *i.e.* the Skeleton World Championship on the world-famed and exciting Cresta Run, on 5th and 6th February; the World Championship in Two-Man Bob, on 7th and 8th February; and the World Championship in Four-Man Bob, on 14th and 15th February. St. Moritz has always been Switzerland's stronghold of bobsleigh fans, and it boasts of excellently maintained runs.

* * *

Grindelwald caterers will make a special effort during Culinary Fortnight (18th January to 1st February 1959) to treat their guests to culinary specialities. Seven Hotels and seven Restaurants are co-operating in a scheme which allows guests to take their dinner at any one of the fourteen establishments. A folder containing further details can be obtained from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458 Strand, London W.C.2.

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A new aerial cable-way is now under construction at the Swiss mountain resort of Villars-Chesières (Canton of Vaud). It will be 7,540 ft. long and lead to the Plateau d'Orsay. The new cable-way will provide easy access to various excellent ski runs, among which is the famous " Ibex Run ".

* * *

During the coming Winter season coaches with Pullman Compartments will be operated on the Rhaetian Railway between Landquart-Kosters-Davos and St. Moritz, and between Chur-Thusis-St. Moritz. The services concerned are specially marked in the Official Swiss Timetable (pages 238/241). In addition to the first class fare the following supplements are charged: Landquart-Klosters, Fr. 2.—; Landquart-Davos Platz, Fr. 3.—; Landquart or Chur - St. Moritz, Fr. 4.—.

Children of 6—16 years pay the same supplementary charges.

Tickets are obtainable from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458 Strand, London W.C.2.

* * *

Rumours in the Swiss press, according to which construction work on a second Gotthard tunnel had started at Göschenen, are premature, the Swiss Federal Railways declared recently. It is true, however, that a small tunnel is now being driven into the rocks, but it will serve shunting purposes only and it will converge with the St. Gotthard trunk tunnel at a distance of some 650 feet. The Swiss Federal Railways admit that plans for a second cut "are being examined" in connection with the project of an Alpine underground throughway for motor traffic, but final steps to this effect cannot be expected in the near future.

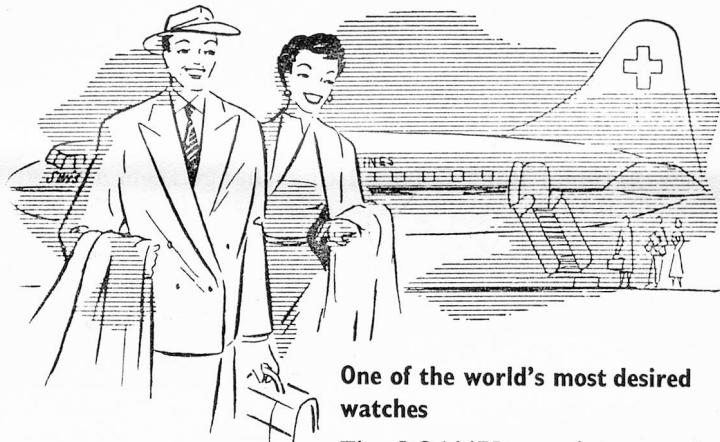
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The Ruetli meadow on the shore of Lake Lucerne, Central Switzerland, one of Switzerland's most significant national shrines, became public property only a hundred years ago. This lovely spot where, according to saga and tradition, the Swiss Confederation had been founded back in 1291 and which served as a meeting place for the ancient Confederates several times in the course of the centuries, had been endangered by profiteers who, in 1858, proposed to construct on it a resort hotel. It was thanks to the children of Switzerland, who spontaneously collected an amount of nearly 100,000 Swiss francs, that the Ruetli could be saved and turned over to the Confederation as an inalienable historic site.

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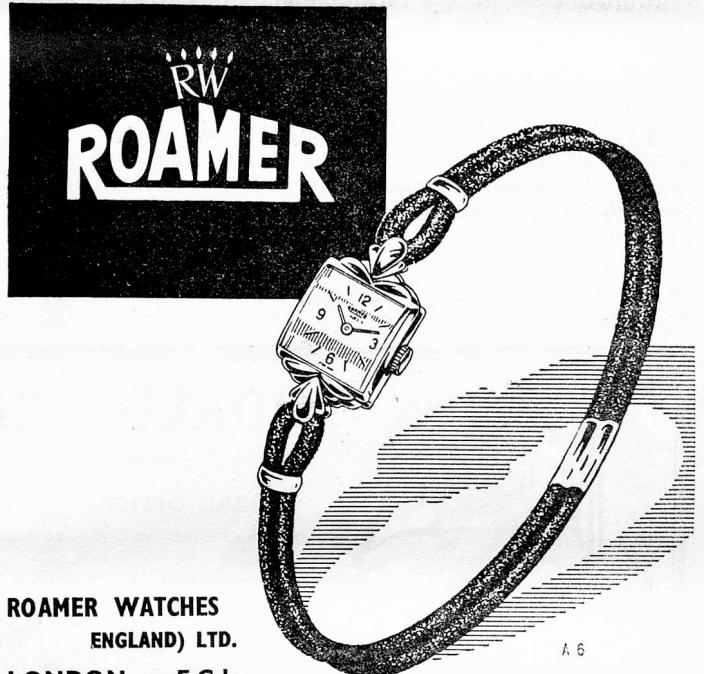
The new type first class carriages (4 axles) ordered by the Swiss Federal Railways have been delivered by the manufacturers at such a satisfactory rate that to-day practically all the old type 2 x 3 axle coaches have been withdrawn. A few Pendulum trains (driving cabs at either end) which cannot be replaced until next spring are the only exception.

Switzerland has accepted another 150 Hungarian refugees at present residing in Austria. This brings the number of Hungarian refugees in Switzerland to 12,719. [A.T.S.]

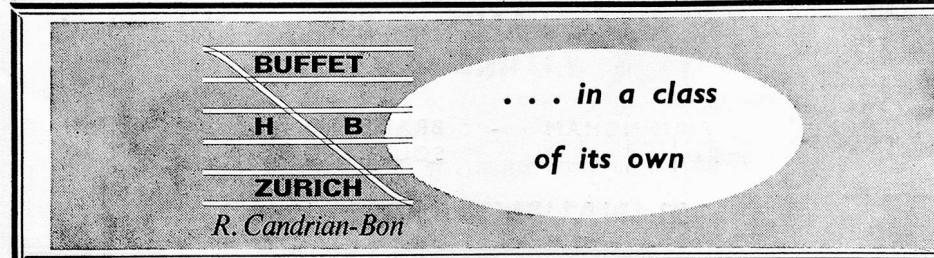


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