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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 Swiss Government has agreed in principle to a plan for equipping its Army with nuclear weapons. The Federal Military Department is to report on the cost and type of equipment. This, however, does not mean that Switzerland intends making her own atomic weapons or entering the international market as a buyer. The Swiss Government will nevertheless continue to foster any efforts made with a view to reaching a general agreement on the suppression of atomic weapons.

* * *

The Federal Council has forbidden the holding of an international congress on nuclear weapons which was to have taken place at Basle on 5th and 6th July. The congress was sponsored by the German "Komitee gegen Atomrüstung", a Communist organisation. Earl Russell, president of the campaign for nuclear disarmament, has issued an open letter to the President of the Swiss Confederation questioning the grounds on which the Swiss Government has forbidden the holding of the congress. As the Federal Government never replies to open letters, the message from Bertrand Russell was left unanswered.

* * *

The following diplomats have presented their credentials to Dr. Th. Holenstein, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Dr. Max Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne: Monsieur Corrado Baldoni, Ambassador Extraordinary and Envoy Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Italy, and Monsieur Manule de Jesus Chuecos, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Venezuela.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Railways carried 18.6 million passengers in May 1958, or 1.7 million more than in May 1957. Receipts: 29.4 million francs (May 1957: 26.7 million francs).

Goods traffic is returned as 1.96 million tons, which is 396,000 tons less than during the same period in 1957. Receipts: 41.6 million francs (May 1957: 46.5 million francs).

* * *

Cantonal

Two mountaineers, Rudolf Huegli (35), father of three children, and Erich Hareiter, single, both of Schaffhausen, lost their lives on an ascent to the Schaechentaler Windgällen. [A.T.S.]

SWISS NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION

Friday, 1st August, 1958
6.45 p.m. to 1 a.m. (Doors open at 6 p.m.)

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Mr. Christian Wittwer (26), of Lenzburg, whilst bathing with his wife, whom he had married only four days previously, was drowned in the lake of Sempach. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The new building of the head offices of the Cantonal Bank at Zug was recently inaugurated in the presence of the members of the cantonal Government and a large number of guests. The building, containing the latest modern office fittings, was built to the plans of architect Hafner. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Two nurses on a climbing expedition in the Gantritsch (Ct. Berne) lost their lives. They were Margrit Stämpfli (23), of Berne, and Heidi Welte (22), of Stallikon (Zurich). [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. Walter Weber has been appointed Vice-Director of the "Schweizerische Depeschen Agentur" Berne. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Federal Council has appointed Lt.-Col. Hans Bürgi, medical practitioner of Grenchen, to the post of head of the Swiss Red Cross, in succession to Colonel Käser, who has relinquished his post. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. jur. François Kohler, from 1950 to 1954 secretary, and since 1955 Vice-Director of the "Insel" Hospital Berne, has been appointed Director in succession to Director Scherz, who on reaching retiring age has vacated his post. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The commune of Orbe (Ct. Vaud) has sent voting papers to its female population, inviting them to express their opinion on votes for women. Of the 1,170 women residents only 360, or 35 per cent, returned the voting paper; 295 voted for women's suffrage, 63 against it, and 2 blank. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The barge "Birsigtal", belonging to the "Ruhr- und Saar Kohle A.G.", carrying a cargo of 1,000 tons of coke crashed — owing to a defect in one of the motors — against two of the pillars of the "Mittleren Rheinbrücke" in Basle and sank. The crew, numbering five, were rescued. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The twelve-million-francs loan at 4½ per cent of the "Schweizerischen Reedereien A.G." met with success. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A fire which broke out at the new works of the paper-manufacturing concern "Walke A.G." in Herisau caused damage estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 100,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

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A motor-car driven by Mr. Johann Meier (66), of Heerbrugg, collided with a train at a level-crossing in Zingg near Au (Ct. St. Gall). The driver was killed and the car was wrecked. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Anna Rohner, a schoolgirl of Schmerikon (St. Gall), was run over and killed whilst crossing a railway track. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The 50th jubilee of the Bernina Railway was celebrated in Le Prese (Ct. Grisons) in the presence of a large number of guests, both Swiss and Italian.

Dr. Gion Darms, President of the Board of the "Rhätischen" Railways, in his address referred to the history of the railway. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The 500th anniversary of the independence of the twelve communes of the Schamser valley (Ct. Grisons) was celebrated at Schams. The festivities started with a procession attended by 400 persons, including all the members of the cantonal Government, depicting historic scenes of the heroic battles fought for the liberation from foreign bondage. In the evening a performance of the play "Val Sainza Stelas" was given. [A.T.S.]

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At the General Meeting of the "Aktiengesellschaft Brown, Boveri & Cie", which took place at Baden on 16th July, a dividend of 9 per cent was declared. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. Othmar Riklin, district veterinary surgeon and municipal councillor of Bremgarten (Ct. Aargau), has been honoured with honorary citizenship for his services to the commune extending over twenty years.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The commune of Münchwilen (Ct. Thurgau) has bestowed honorary citizenship on Mr. and Mrs. E. Müller-Mettler. Mr. Mettler was the first "Gemeindeammann" of the commune. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. W. Huwyler have been honoured with honorary citizenship of the commune of Kreuzlingen (Ct. Thurgau). Mr. Huwyler was in the service of the commune for thirty years, for fourteen of which he acted as "Stadtammann". [A.T.S.]

* * *

The commune of Asnières (Ct. Geneva) has celebrated the 100th anniversary of its foundation.

* * *

A special committee, appointed by the Government of the canton of Geneva, has awarded three prizes to competitors for designs for the erection of a monument to the memory of Henri Dunant, founder of the International Red Cross. 1st prize, Jacques Probst (6,000.— francs); 2nd prize, Henri Presset (3,000.— francs); and 3rd prize, Heinz Schwarz (1,000.— francs). [A.T.S.]

Mgr. Georges Delaloye has been appointed canon and vicar-general to the Abbey of St. Maurice, in succession to Mgr. C. Follonier, who has vacated his office. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Académie française" has awarded the "Broquettegonin" prize to the Geneva writer Yolande Pittard for her work "Du doute à l'absolue".

[A.T.S.]

* * *

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. Arthur Müller, since 1946 "Stadtammann" of Brugg, in Brugg, at the age of 47.

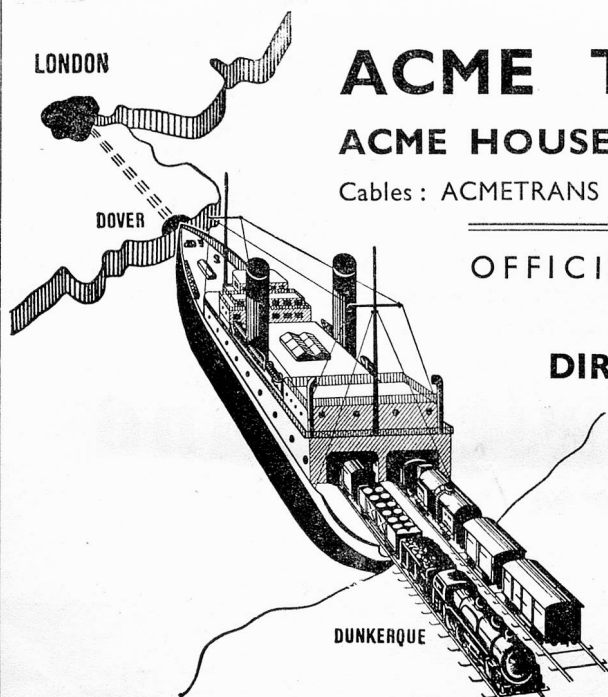
Paul Perrin, former General Secretary of the Swiss railwaymen's union, and from 1919 to 1953 a member of the National Council, in Berne, aged 72.

Dr. Eugen Wehrli, a former well-known eye specialist, practising in Basle, in Basle, at the age of 87. The University of Basle honoured him in 1940 with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*.

Gabriel Bonnet, secretary of the Geneva Stock Exchange, President of the commune of Plainpalais, chief editor of the paper "Le Libéral Suisse", and a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 78.

Alexandre Aubert, since 1929 Director of the "Zentralen Armenverwaltung" of the town of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 72.

Johann Knuesel, deacon of the "Priesterkapitel" Zug, and from 1910 to 1941 a priest in Unteraegeri, in Zug, aged 83.



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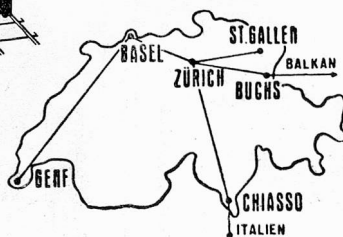
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Tell Perrin, lawyer and lecturer at the University of Neuchâtel, in La Chaux-de-Fonds, at the age of 78. The deceased was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel from 1922 to 1950. He sat in the National Council from 1943 to 1955.

Mrs. Anna Halder, the oldest inhabitant of the town of St. Gall, in St. Gall, aged 99.

Ezechiel Enocari, President of the Basle criminal court, and from 1926 to 1956 a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Basle-Town, in Basle, at the age of 63.

Otto Treyraud, chief editor of the "Feuille d'avis de Lausanne", and author, in Pully, aged 68. [A.T.S.]

ARMY.

During a training course for alpine troops at Rosenlauri (Ct. Berne), corporal Niklas Schärer (26), machine technician of Chambéry (Geneva), fell 100 feet on the Simelistock (Engelhörner), and was killed when a rope broke. [A.T.S.]

LEGACIES.

The late Felicia Wehrli, of Aarau, has left a legacy of 10,000.— francs to the commune of Aarau, and 10,000.— francs to the foundation "Wo es nötig ist".

Mr. A. Dietrich, landscape painter, of Berlingen, who died in June of last year, has left 8,200.— francs to the commune of Berlingen for the purpose of assisting poor people. [A.T.S.]

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

For some time we have reported the ever-increasing and alarming motoring accidents in Switzerland causing heavy loss of life.

In the issue of the "Daily Telegraph" of July 5th, "Peterborough" writes under the column "London Day by Day" as follows:

Worst Drivers in Europe.

"Are the Belgians the worst drivers in Europe, as is popularly believed? Or does the palm go to the Swiss?"

"That it now should be the view I have heard fairly often lately. Certainly Switzerland is the only country in which I have ever been overtaken on the inside on a blind corner."

"Yet Switzerland, unlike Belgium, imposes driving tests. Perhaps madness at the wheel is a reaction from the country's general saneness."

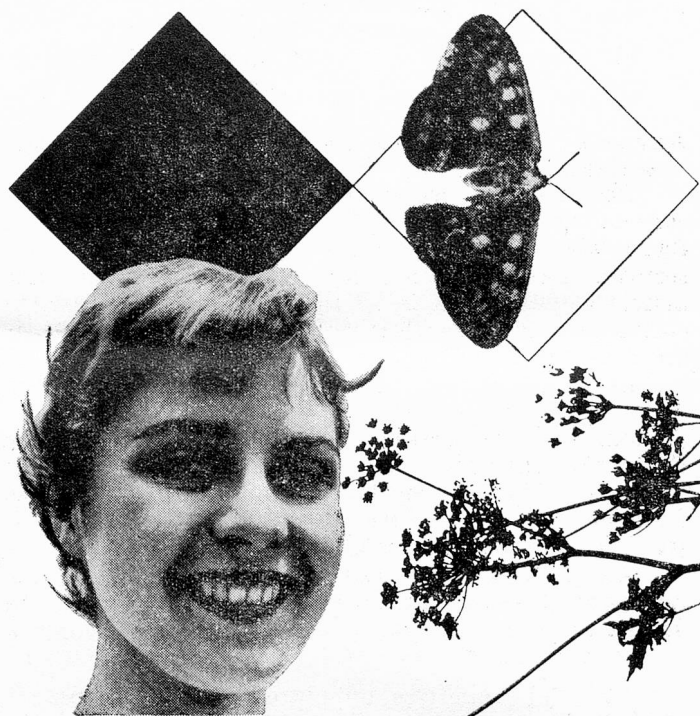
A motor-cyclist who had been deprived of his driving licence crashed at Birsfelden owing to excessive speed. His passenger, Mrs. Doris Bannier-Stutz (21), of Oerlikon, was killed. The driver has been arrested.

The Court of Geneva has sentenced a motorist who, when driving while under the influence of alcohol, caused the death of another motorist, to two and a-half years' imprisonment. The delinquent had been on previous occasions charged with the identical offence.

A motor-car, in overtaking, collided with an oncoming car, the driver of which, Fredi Suter, of Dintikon (Ct. Aargau), received fatal injuries.

A motor-cycle driven by Hanspeter Wegmüller (18), of Birmenstorf, collided with a demarcation stone on the Bözberg. He and his passenger, Hans Lüthi (22), of Brugg, were killed.

[A.T.S.]



A Special Swiss welcome to all women this year

SAFFA — an Exhibition devoted to women and their activities presents a kaleidoscope of Swiss life. Every woman will be charmed and delighted with this Pageant of Switzerland which offers close contact with the life of the modern woman and her place in the home, community and the arts. Tell your British friends not to miss this unique opportunity while spending their holidays in Switzerland, the country everyone wants to go to and no one wants to leave. SAFFA will be open in Zurich from 17th July to 15th September 1958. Full details from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458 Strand, London, W.C.2.

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