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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss Federal Government has refused an East German women's organization permission to convene at Lausanne an international women's congress to oppose the projected atomic armament of Switzerland.

Customs receipts for the month of March 1959 total 82.4 million francs; of this amount the Confederation receives 59.1 million francs.

During the first three months of the current year the receipts amount to 157.3 million francs, or 3.8 million francs less than during the same period in 1958.

M. Paul Chaudet, President of the Swiss Confederation, has received in special audience two Turkish Cabinet Ministers, at present on an inspection tour in Switzerland, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne. They were afterwards entertained at a dinner by the Federal Council.

Monsieur Mario Fumasoli, at present Swiss Ambassador in Buenos Aires, has been appointed Ambassador to Spain.

M. Fumasoli was born in 1901, at Vaglio (Ct. Ticino). He studied Law at the University of Fribourg and in Germany, and entered the diplomatic service in 1925. He has occupied successively posts in Istanbul, The Hague, Buenos Aires, Rome and Madrid. In 1948 M. Fumasoli was appointed Swiss Minister to Argentina and Paraguay with residence at Buenos Aires. Later on he received Ambassadorial rank.

The Federal Council has nominated Monsieur Otto Seifert, at present Swiss Ambassador in Oslo, as Ambassador to Argentina and Minister to Paraguay with residence in Buenos Aires.

Ambassador Seifert was born in 1902, and is a citizen of Wartau (Ct. St. Gall) and Kreuzlingen (Ct. Thurgau). He entered the diplomatic service in 1934, and in succession occupied posts in Rome, Madrid and Budapest. In 1951 he was appointed Swiss Minister to

Israel, and three years later (1954) he was transferred to Indonesia in the same capacity. In 1956 M. Seifert was appointed Minister in Oslo, where he later received Ambassadorial rank.

A new Customs tariff to replace the outdated tariff of 1921 was adopted by the National Council. It will increase average import duties from the present 4.5 per cent to something over 5 per cent. The cost of living in Switzerland is expected to rise about one per cent.

Cantonal

A deficit of 408,162.— francs is reported in the accounts of the canton of Schwyz for 1958. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Obwalden for 1958 close with a deficit of 215,762.— francs. [A.T.S.]

Three youths between the ages of 14 and 17 hired a rowing boat in Lucerne for a trip on the lake. Owing to strong winds and other bad weather conditions, the boat capsized and the occupants were thrown into the water. Two of them were rescued, but the third, Herbert Heller (15), of Littau, was drowned. [A.T.S.]

The strength of the various Parties in the "Kantonsrat" Zurich, after the recent election is as follows: Liberals, 33 seats (3 gains); Peasant and Bourgeois Party, 35 seats (4 gains); Christian Socialist Party, 24 seats (4 gains); Democrats, 10 seats (7 losses); Evangelical Party, 8 seats (1 gain); "Landesring" (Duttweiler Party), 19 seats (1 gain); Socialist Party, 49 seats (5 losses); Communist Party, 2 seats (no change); Independent 0 (1 loss). Total number of seats, 180. [A.T.S.]

All the former members of the Government of the canton of Zurich have been re-elected. Here are the respective figures of the poll: Jakob Heusser (Peasant and Bourgeois Party), 82,653 votes; Rudolf Meier (Peasant and Bourgeois Party), 83,818 votes; Paul Meierhans (Socialist), 60,684 votes; Franz Egger (Socialist), 66,376 votes; Walter Koenig ("Landesring" Duttweiler Party), 55,913 votes; Hans Brugger (Liberal), 82,553 votes. [A.T.S.]

A student, Thomas Beck (21), of Effretikon (Ct. Zurich), has been killed by an avalanche. He had set out alone on a skiing excursion above Toerbel (Ct. Valais). When he failed to return a search party went out, and a dog found his body buried under a mass of snow. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Berne for 1958 close with a credit balance of 113,872.— francs. [A.T.S.]