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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM



Federal

On 27th May the Swiss electorate rejected by a big majority a Federal Government proposal to raise the daily allowance of Members of Parliament from Fr.65.— to Fr.100.—. Considering that they have to pay for travelling and accommodation out of their allowances, they rarely have more than about Fr.3,000.— left over at the end of the annual Parliamentary Sessions. The polling result showed, however, that the public had no sympathy with their grievance and considered an increase untimely when a national wages pause was being called for.

On the other hand, the electorate voted for a proposal for the addition of new articles to the Constitution, enabling the Government to grant more subsidies for restoration work and for the purchase of land and houses in order to preserve nature and historical monuments.

* * *

Monsieur Edouard de Haller, Swiss Ambassador in the Netherlands, is retiring from the Diplomatic Service. The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur Jean Merminod, at present Minister in Uruguay, as his successor. Monsieur de Haller, a Bernese, was born in 1897. He studied Law at the universities of Geneva and Zurich. He filled various posts abroad and was a director of the League of Nations before he offered his services to the International Red Cross in 1942. He became Swiss Ambassador in Norway and Iceland in 1948, in Moscow in 1953, and in the Hague in 1957.

Monsieur Merminod was born in 1903 and hails from Geneva. He studied Law there, and in 1928 he joined the Swiss Foreign Office. His special interest was centred on the development of waterways. He was appointed First Counsellor of Embassy in Paris in 1950, and since 1954 he has held the post of Minister in Uruguay.

* * *

The Federal Council has been empowered by Parliament to establish diplomatic relations with Sierra Leone, and has appointed the Swiss Ambassador in Senegal, Monsieur J. J. de Tribolet, to act as accredited representative of the Confederation in Freetown, in addition to his present duties in Dakar. The Swiss Colony will remember Monsieur de Tribolet, who was First Counsellor of Embassy in London until last year.

* * *

The Federal Military Department, in conjunction with the Swiss Foreign Office, have appointed General Staff Colonel Karl Erny as Military and Air Attaché in Washington and Ottawa. Colonel Erny will succeed

General Staff Colonel Werner Koch, who was Military Attaché in London a few years ago.

* * *

The Federal Council in its message to Parliament proposes to increase the annual subsidy to the International Red Cross Committee from a half-million Swiss Francs to between 750,000 and a million francs. The message also includes a proposal to increase the federal subsidy to the Swiss National Fund for Scientific Research by 6 million to 23 million francs.

* * *

In succession to the retiring Chief of Chancellery Zimmermann, the Federal Court of Justice in Lausanne has appointed the present assistant, Ernst Signer, born 1899, from Hundwil (Aargau). He in his turn has been succeeded by Jean-Pierre Perdizat, born 1924, from Onnens (Vaud).

* * *

Cantonal

The French Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Philippe Baudet, paid an official visit to Zurich. The Cantonal Government authorities welcomed him in the famous Haus zum Rechberg. The visitor attended a press conference and a reception given by the town authorities and visited the Federal University of Technology (ETH), where more than 130 French students are enrolled. [A.T.S.]

* * *

National Councillor Erwin Schneider has resigned his seat in Parliament and will be succeeded by Emil Schaffer, from Stettlen, a member of the Social Democratic party. The new Councillor was born in 1924 and is "Regierungsstatthalter" at Langenthal (Berne). [A.T.S.]

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The annual accounts for 1961 of the Canton of Solothurn closed with a surplus of 1½ million francs. The accounts of the Canton of Basle also showed an excess of income over expenditure of 8.1 million francs. [A.T.S.]

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King Baudouin of the Belgians paid a visit to the European Atomic Energy Research Centre in Geneva (CERN). [A.T.S.]

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DEATHS

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:

Robert Spruengli, chairman of the board of directors of the chocolate manufacturing company of Lindt and Spruengli. He was 76.

Amelie-Florine Kammermann, at the age of 100 years and 6½ months, the oldest inhabitant of Bienne.

Fritz Bach, president of the commune of Frutigen (Berne). He was 64 and had devoted his life to research into the history and nature life of the local district.

Josef Roth, at the age of 87. He hailed from Beinwil (Solothurn) and had been chosen as "wearer of the gown of honour of Solothurn" in March, but had died before he was invested. This garment has been given to the eldest of the descendants of Hans Roth who saved the town of Solothurn in 1382.

Jakob Froehlich, at the age of 75. An engine driver by occupation, he was Commune Councillor of Weinfelden and Councillor of the Canton of Thurgau.

Elfo Marcionni, at the age of 71. He had been a member of the Commune Council of Brissago (Ticino) since 1928, and its President for the past eight years.

Benjamin Vallotton, the famous Vaudois writer, at the age of 85. He studied theology, but became a teacher and later lived in the Alsace and in the South of France. Amongst his many works are the novel "Famille Profit" (1908), for which he received the "Prix Jouy" from the Académie Française. In 1912 he shared the "Prix Rambert" with C. F. Ramuz. Vallotton was a Knight of the Légion d'Honneur and he was awarded the "Grand Prix de Langue Française" from the Académie Française in 1944. He was also a member of the Académie Royale de Belgique.

Paul Balmer, at the age of 81. He was a member of the Grand Council of Neuchâtel (Liberal) for 23 years and a former President of the Commune of Valangin and also of the Agricultural Society of the Val-de-Ruz.

François Graisier, a former Socialist Grand Councillor of Geneva. He was connected with the papers "Le Travail" and "Voix Ouvrière".

Eugène Pittard from Geneva died in Paris at the age of 94. He was Professor of Anthropology and founded the Ethnographical Museum in Geneva in 1902. He wrote several scientific books and was awarded various medals and prizes by universities at home and abroad, amongst others an honorary membership of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain.

Paul Wenger, at the age of 74. He was a well-known Professor of Chemistry at the University of Geneva, of which he was a dean and former rector magnificus.

Marcel Feuillat from Geneva. He was a goldsmith of repute, also a painter and sculptor and until a few weeks ago director of the Geneva Art Schools. He was 66.

[A.T.S.]

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JUBILEE AND BIRTHDAYS

Mr. and Mrs. Johann and Barbara Schmid-Fluri from Schwanden (Glarus) celebrated their Diamond Wedding on 21st May, both at the age of 82. Mr. and Mrs. Herold-Dubs celebrated theirs in Zurich on 14th May.

Mr. and Mrs. Boesch-Ehrsam celebrated their Iron Wedding on 17th May. This couple have lived on their farm at Herisau ever since their wedding 65 years ago. He is 91, his wife 89.

Gottardo Segantini, the painter and writer from Maloja, reached the age of 80 on 25th May. Another octogenarian is Albert Blanc, a well-known Vaudois politician and a former Prefect of the Town of Lausanne.

The former National Councillor Paul Rufener, Chairman of the Board of the "Verbandsdruckerei A.G. Bern", celebrated his 70th birthday on 18th May.

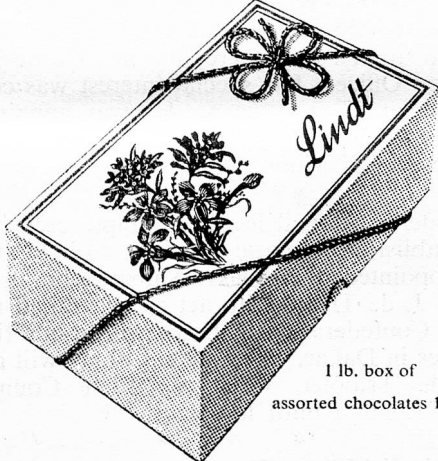
[A.T.S.]

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