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Monthly parliamentary sessions?

The Government is studying proposals to hold monthly parliamentary sessions with scepticism. The two houses of Parliament presently meet for four sessions of approximately a month each every year. The Secretariat of the Federal Assembly has called for an alteration of the system to monthly week-long sessions, with a recess in July and August. The Secretariat believes that this would give the opportunity to members of Parliament to discuss current issues while these were still topical. The proposed system would also reduce the pile-up of parliamentary work. A spokesman for the Federal Chancery said that monthly recesses would probably not reduce the burden of work.

New agreement between Geneva and the neighbouring French local authorities

Geneva has accepted to pay neighbouring French communes yearly compensations for the losses incurred by French borderer-workers employed in Geneva.

Over 21,000 French workers drive in to work in Geneva every day and pay cantonal taxes. Their local authorities have long claimed for some form of compensation from the Swiss authorities. A Franco-Genevese commission was set up and negotiations led to an agreement whereby Geneva would pay 5 million francs to the French communes concerned in 1973, and 10 million francs the following year.

Obituaries

H. O. ERNST

It is with regret that we have to advise our Readers of the death of Mr. Heinrich Otto Ernst (known to his Swiss friends as Otto and to his English friends as Henry). Mr. Ernst was born in 1894 and came to England in 1919 as a Junior Clerk with the Swiss Federal Railways, London Agency. By dint of very hard work his efforts on behalf of both the Swiss Federal Railways and Swiss National Tourist Office, of which he was then Manager, since 1946, the interest in travel to Switzerland was enormously increased and popularised. Mr. Ernst always took a keen interest in the Swiss Colony in this country and was very much involved in the activities of various Clubs and Societies.

Mr. Ernst retired from his work in the latter part of 1959, remaining in this country until his death on the 14th February, 1973. Sincere condolences are extended to the whole of his family.

MRS. E. M. BOEHRINGER

It is with the deepest regret that we have to announce the death after a long illness of Mrs. Elsie Martha Boehringer, the wife of the late Founder of the *Swiss Observer*. Mrs. Boehringer was in her 80th year. The death occurred during the night 19th/20th February, 1973, at the

home of her son Mr. Oscar F. Boehringer in Golders Green. This latter is the present Secretary to the Swiss Observer Council and Chairman of Swiss Observer Ltd. Since the first issue of our Paper in 1919 Mrs. Boehringer has always shown the keenest interest in the publication and was a pillar of strength to her husband in this venture during his lifetime. Mrs. Boehringer had a wide circle of friends in the Swiss Colony and in her earlier years took a most lively and active interest in the various organisations formed for the benefit of Swiss Nationals in the U.K.

The Swiss Colony in the U.K. are deeply indebted to the Boehringer family as a whole for their unstinting support both financially and administratively of the *Swiss Observer* and this makes it all the more saddening when we learn of the passing on of any member of that family. The Council, staff and we, are sure that we may include all of our readers in offering most sincere sympathy to both Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Boehringer in this most grievous loss.

Switzerland third in telephone league

Switzerland is third in the world telephone-density league.

With 50.91 sets per 100 inhabitants at the beginning of last year, it came third after the United States (60.13), and Sweden (57.58). With 3.2 million telephone sets, it had more units than the whole of Central America and nearly as many as the African continent (3.5 million sets).

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