

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 10 (1944-1945)
Heft: 9

Rubrik: Sundry news from Switzerland

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THE SWISS GOVERNMENT ANSWERS ACCUSATIONS REGARDING THE GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

The Swiss Government gave its attention to certain accusations made against Switzerland in her role of Protecting Power, by certain allied newspapers. These accusations bear on the terrible conditions found in certain German prison camps about which it is alleged that Switzerland never issued any reports. The Swiss Federal Council firmly refuses to accept any criticisms of that kind.

"The territory of Germany had to be conquered before the indescribable horrors of the concentration camps were revealed to the world. The situation which has just come to light has caused universal indignation. It was never dreamed that a people would have the audacity to set themselves up as defenders of Western culture and to sink so low as to indulge in such atrocities. The emotion felt in Switzerland was just as great, as that which swept across the other nations. Therefore, our surprise and consternation were all the greater when we read in some allied newspapers the reproaches made against Switzerland and the International Red Cross.

Throughout the war, Switzerland and the International Red Cross, which she has supported to the limits of her strength have left nothing undone that might contribute to the alleviation of the state of military prisoners. We saw to it that international conventions were observed and respected. This cannot be contested and the Allied governments, which are better informed than the press, know well that both the International Red Cross and Switzerland have been persistent in their actions.

As for the concentration camps, it never has been possible to do anything about them. Attempts have been made to intervene, but the results have always been a flat refusal to allow them to be visited.

The status of the International Red Cross only permitted her to deal with military prisoners. There is no international law allowing a Protecting Power the right to concern itself with political internees.

Switzerland would have liked to have intervened. She would like to have had the means to do so and to put an end to these ignominious acts, but she did not have the necessary means of action. She therefore is not open to criticism. She acted in every case where it was materially possible to do so. She cannot therefore be reproached with failure to do her duty. She is not guilty of those accusations and she means to proclaim her innocence in no uncertain terms."

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SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The British Minister in Berne, Mr. Norton, has handed the Federal President a letter from Prime Minister Churchill. In this message Mr. Churchill expresses his satisfaction about the outcome of the commercial negotiations in Berne between the Allied and Swiss delegates. At the same time he thanks the Swiss government and people for the great humanitarian services which Switzerland in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross has contributed, especially with regard to British prisoners of war and to the protection of foreign interests. The Prime Minister assures Switzerland that the feelings are shared by the whole British people. The President, in the name of the Federal Council and of the Swiss people has thanked Mr. Churchill for this manifestation of confidence towards Switzerland.

On May 1st, a British aircraft with 12 Swiss nurses and 6 Swiss doctors landed near the German concentration camp of Belsen. The purpose of this mission is to bring rapid help to the internees of this camp. The plane had come from England and landed in Switzerland to receive the Swiss medical mission and proceeded to Germany. An agreement had been concluded with the Germans that this plane which was specially marked should not be attacked. The Swiss physicians and nurses have already started their work. It has been the first time in several years that a British civil plane has landed in Switzerland.

In the weekly New York Times Magazine Section of April 29, Mr. Lauchlin Currie, head of the American commercial mission to Switzerland, declared that the Allies are about to discover the hidden Nazi funds, concealed in neutral countries and reserved for financing of the new war. Mr. Currie called the agreement reached between Switzerland and the Allies a considerable success in the financial disarmament of Germany. He expressed his satisfaction about Switzerland's attitude on this question and added: "We feel we can rely upon the honest and very efficient Swiss governmental Administration to insure that the job will be well done and that few German assets will escape disclosure. The consequences of these actions by Switzerland are far reaching and important. They relate not only to the present war but also to our chances for peace in the post-war period." Mr. Currie furthermore expressed the hope that the other neutral countries will take the same steps as Switzerland.

A new Swiss film, "The Last Chance", produced by the Praesons Film Company, has just been finished. The film is in several languages and shows the escape of prisoners of war to Switzerland. The first performance will take place in Zurich shortly. A representative for the Praesons Film Company will personally take the picture to England where the first performance abroad will be organized.

The Commander in Chief of the Swiss Army which has kept faithful guard of our frontiers during six long years addressed an order of the day to his troops in which he stresses the duties that remain to be fulfilled, and said: "You have stood firm at your post, true to your oath. You have done well for the country."

The Federal Council considered the demobilization of the Army, which is planned as quickly as possible. However, after so long a period of active service, demobilization requires a certain delay. It must be carried out systematically. Some units will have to be kept under arms for frontier guard duty, though some have already been demobilized.

The demobilization of the Swiss soldiers will be followed by the mobilization of the citizens for the fight against unemployment.

The direction of the PTT is bringing out new stamps to celebrate Victory Day in Europe. They will be for the 13 most used denominations. At the same time, a special Red Cross stamp will be issued costing 15 centimes and worth 5 centimes for postal purposes. The other ten centimes will go for Red Cross funds.

The end of the Reich as an independent state has made it necessary for the Federal Council to take a number of decisions. On May 8, at 2.00 P.M. the German Legation in Berne was closed. All the members of the Legation will have to leave Swiss territory within three days. Those who do not leave within the delay fixed will be subject to police rulings regarding aliens. This means that our authorities will be able to make a distinction between the acceptable and the undesirable elements involved. The Legation buildings will be administered by the Confederation until they can be handed over to a new German representative.

Swiss Consulates on German territory have been authorized on the other hand to continue their activity unofficially until further notice. This has been ordered in the interest of the Swiss citizens residing in Germany.

The Federal Council by decree dated May 1st with effect May 9 has dissolved the section in Switzerland of the National Socialist Party, which grouped members of the German colony in Switzerland. All organizations connected with it come under the same dissolution order.

Wilhelm Stengel, head of the German National Socialist Party in Switzerland has been expelled from Switzerland. Though Stengel appealed against this measure asking that he be accorded the right of asylum, the Federal Council turned it down.

According to the Japanese Information Bureau, the government of Japan is asking the Swiss government to represent Japanese interests in 8 countries while Sweden will be charged with Japanese interests in 8 other countries, particularly in South America. Should Switzerland accept, she would take charge of Japan's interests in the U.S.A., Canada and in several Latin American states.

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