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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

SWISS NATIONAL BANK.

On September 15th, the gold reserves of the Swiss National Bank amounted to 2,851 millions Swiss francs; discounts and advances on securities reached 44.1 millions. The notes in circulation (1,656 millions) and the other liabilities at sight (1,628 millions) were covered by 86.8%.

DIPLOMATIC NEWS.

M. de Modzelewski, the Polish Minister, accredited to the Swiss Confederation, is shortly retiring from his post.

The departing Minister, who is the Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps in Berne, has held his post since 1919, he is married to a Swiss Lady from Fribourg.

Monsieur de Modzelewski is retiring for reasons of health and the departure of this popular diplomat in the capital of the Swiss Confederation is universally regretted.

LEGACIES.

The late Dr. Otto Hultegger has left an amount of 25,000 frs. to the community of Meilen; the interest of the capital is to be used for educational purposes. A legacy was also left to the community of Stäfa.

M. Henri Rohrdorf, from Zurich, who recently died at the age of 91, has given an amount of 84,000 frs. to religious and charitable institutions.

M. Jakob Lühinger in Basle, has made a donation amounting to 50,000 frs. to the community of Oberriet (St. Gall) to be used as a holiday fund.

The late Mme. H. Haffter-Bertschi of Zurich has bequeathed a sum of 33,000 frs. to various communities.

EX-FEDERAL JUDGE DR. A. SOLDATI +.

The death is reported from Lugano of Dr. Agostino Soldati, late Federal Judge.

The deceased was born in 1856 in Neggio near Lugano, and for many years Dr. Soldati was one of the leading personalities in the political sphere of the canton of Ticino. He presided over the cantonal government in 1893. From 1890-92 he sat in Parliament (States Council). In 1892 he was elected a member of the Supreme Court to which he belonged until his retirement in 1936.

Dr. Soldati was one of the outstanding Judges in the Federal Tribunal, and during the 44 years as a Judge he has rendered great services to our country.

GENEVA NEWSPAPER SUSPENDED.

The Swiss Federal Council has decided to prohibit the publication of the *Journal des Nations* for three months. This newspaper appears daily, and bears under its title the words "published at the seat of the League of Nations," but that is to be interpreted only as meaning the city of Geneva, as it has no connection with the League. The reason given in an official statement is that it published on September 30th an article in which it referred to the four negotiators at Munich as "the Butchers' Club." (The actual context was, "Eight points and two annexes were signed towards midnight at the Butchers' Club. Each of these points, each of these annexes, cuts into the living flesh of a people, cuts into the collective conception of rights.")

The statement goes on to say that having regard to the present international situation, this expression is calculated to imperil the good relations between Switzerland and foreign countries.

"The newspaper in question (the statement adds) is a foreign organ; it has continuously abused our hospitality by conducting from our country, without regard for our international relations, an anti-Fascist campaign against the totalitarian States." Reference is made to numerous representations addressed in the past to the Federal Government by these States on account of "the insulting language" of the journal in question.

The editor of the *Journal des Nations*, Signor A'Prato, was expelled from Switzerland in January, 1937, and has since conducted the policy of the paper from a French town just across the frontier.

It is understood that certain Swiss newspapers which have been very outspoken in their criticism of the Munich Agreement have been warned to observe a greater moderation unless they desire to court a similar fate.

NAZIS BAN SWISS BOOK.

The official German Reich Gazette announces that Herr Himmeler, chief of the Reich police and protective guards, has forbidden the sale and circulation in Germany of the Book, "Martin Niemoeller und sein Bekenntnis" — "Martin Niemoeller and his Creed."

This work, which deals with Pastor Niemoeller, the head of the confessional section of the German Evangelical Church, who has been detained by the Nazi authorities in prison and a concentration camp for many months, is published in Switzerland.

EARLY SNOW IN SWITZERLAND.

Snow has fallen in the Alps during the last few days down to an altitude of 6,000ft.

It now lies fairly deep on the heights. The temperature has risen slightly.

LOCAL.

BERNE.

The "Progymnasium" in Thun has celebrated last Sunday the 100th Anniversary of its foundation. A "Festschrift" has been written by the rector Dr. Trepp.

Dr. J. Käppeli, "Direktor der Abteilung für Landwirtschaft im Eidg. Volkswirtschafts Dept." has resigned from his post which he has held with great distinction for a great number of years. The Federal Council has accepted his resignation, expressing to Dr. Käppeli the thanks of the government for the long and eminent services he has rendered.

The Federal Council has appointed States-Councillor Dr. G. Willi, to the post of "Direktor des Bundesamtes für Industrie, Gewerbe und Arbeit," in succession to M. Renggli.

Dr. Willi hails from the canton of Grisons, he studied law at the Universities of Fribourg and Vienna, and established himself in 1911 as an advocate in Chur. From 1920-1926, Dr. Willi was a member of the cantonal government, and in 1935 he entered Parliament (States Council). He is 54 years old.

Dr. Hans Tschumi, a former member of the government of the canton of Berne, and a member of Parliament (National Council) has celebrated his 80th birthday. Dr. Tschumi was one of the leading personalities in the political sphere of the canton of Berne for many years and his services to our country have been manifold.

CITY SWISS CLUB
Please Reserve
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25th
for the
Annual Banquet and Ball
at the
GROSVENOR HOUSE, PARK LANE, W.1.
Admission by ticket only, obtainable from Member
of the Committee.

M. Alexander von Steiger, who was for forty years in the service of the Swiss Confederation as head of the Federal "Oberbauinspektorates," has tendered his resignation to the Federal Council. M. von Steiger is 70 years old.

BASEL.

The death has occurred in Basle of M. Armin Stöcklin, late member of the government of the canton Basle-Town, at the age of 77.

M. J. Oertli-Strammann, Managing-Director of the "Seidentrocknungs Anstalt" in Basle, has celebrated his 80th birthday.

LUCERNE.

The death is reported from Lucerne, of M. Alfred Müller, since 1918 a judge of the Superior Court of the canton of Lucerne.

LA POLITIQUE

Défense spirituelle.

On parle beaucoup en Suisse, depuis quelque temps, de "défense spirituelle." C'est ce que nos confédérés appellent la *geistige Landesverteidigung*. Elle fournit un thème de discussion à de nombreux congrès d'intellectuels, d'hommes politiques; elle est laborieusement exposée dans des brochures, des livres, des articles. Elle a son écho au parlement. Et c'est aussi l'un des soucis du sympathique M. Etter, conseiller fédéral, qui, comme chef du département de l'intérieur, doit s'occuper de ce qui bout dans nos cervelles, tandis que son collègue de l'économie publique s'occupe plutôt de ce qui cuit dans nos casseroles.

La réunion de l'Autriche à l'empire allemand a porté à son plus haut degré d'acuité le problème de la "défense spirituelle." Nos bons amis d'outre-Sarine craignent la propagande germanique, habile et dissimulée, plus encore que la brutale mainmise politique. Leurs journaux en fournissent la preuve. Et tandis qu'entre 1914 et 1918, plusieurs d'entre eux ne cachaient pas leurs sympathies pour la *Kultur* qui propageait, par les moyens que l'on sait, les armées de Guillaume II, ils, se préoccupent énormément, aujourd'hui, de maintenir en Suisse un esprit suisse, et uniquement suisse.

C'est efforts méritent d'être encouragés, dans la mesure où ils répondent à un besoin réel et où ils se gardent de tout excès. S'il y a vraiment des décisions à prendre pour développer l'"esprit suisse" par l'enseignement, la littérature, le film, la radio, le théâtre, les conférences, eh bien, allons-y! Nous ne contestons pas que certains aspects de notre vie politique, sociale, régionale, de notre folklore, puissent être mieux connus qu'il ne le sont, des habitants mêmes de notre pays. Et il y a des années que nous avons protesté contre certaines "actualités" étrangères au cinéma et que nous avons demandé qu'on leur substituât des actualités suisses. C'est un cas entre plusieurs, un exemple entre cent. L'invasion de certains journaux étrangers, uniquement voués au culte de la sensation dans ce qu'elle a de plus grossier, mérite aussi un examen attentif et approfondi. Nous ajouterons encore qu'il n'est pas indifférent, pour l'esprit public, qu'une agence de presse à caractère officiel puise à peu près toutes ses informations à une seule et unique source: celle d'une agence étrangère, qui est au service du gouvernement de son pays et dont la partialité, notamment dans des périodes critiques telles que celles que nous venons de traverser, saute aux yeux des gens les moins prévenus. Le Conseil fédéral, qui subventionne l'agence en question, et qui la patronne, ferait bien d'étudier ce cas de près, et, au besoin, de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour qu'une institution mise au service de la presse suisse et qui n'a d'autres raisons d'être que de la servir, ne se fasse pas le véhicule d'une propagande fort suspecte à nos yeux.

Ce qui nous frappe, du reste, et ce qui nous étonne, lorsqu'on parle de "défense spirituelle," c'est que l'on cherche midi à quatorze heures. On a l'air d'attendre, sur je ne sais quel Sinaï, je ne sais quelle révélation subite, quel miracle tonitruant. On cherche, dans des conférences, mille moyens ingénieux ou subtils d'amener les Suisses à penser et à agir conformément à leurs intérêts supérieurs, qui sont la sauvegarde de leur indépendance et du régime démocratique. Au vrai,