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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY P. F. BOEHRINGER.

**The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.**

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Federal Council, on May 18th, making use of the emergency powers granted by Parliament, issued a decree which came into effect on May 20th and has validity for two years.

This decree, which is a fundamental contradiction to the Swiss Constitution, can only be considered as a measure of wartime expediency. It gives the Federal Council the right to de-nationalise Swiss citizens who are living abroad and have committed grave offences either against the security of the Swiss Confederation or against its political independence. Such persons are considered as being no longer worthy of Swiss citizenship. The person affected or his (or her) home canton or home borough have the right to appeal against any decision of the Federal Council making use of this decree, moreover it is announced that any such decision does not affect any relatives or descendant of the culprit.

There have been some very isolated cases of Swiss citizens sympathising with Axis countries to such an extent that they either committed high treason or indulged in propagandist and fifth column activities against their own country. Those apprehended by Swiss courts have been dealt with, some having been shot for high treason, some serving long sentences of hard labour. The new decree is aimed at the very few who have committed such acts from without the boundaries of Switzerland posing as good Swiss and shielding their subversive activities behind their citizenship. One or two such cases are well known to the Swiss authorities and it is expected that the new decree will be made to operate against them in the near future.

\* \* \*

The report for 1942 (just published) of the Political Department states that last year sixteen Swiss nationals lost their lives due to aerial action, i.e., four in Germany, three in Italy, four in France and five in North Africa; in addition four became victims of actions on the high seas. A number have suffered more or less serious injuries and the loss in worldly possessions is continually increasing especially in Germany and Italy. Our country was acting as a protecting power for no less than 26 different nations and the

staff employed at Berne in this connection exceeds 110 while those engaged in a similar capacity at the Swiss Legations abroad was about 800. For disbursements, the pay of the special staff and general administration expenses the Confederation had received from the Powers represented the sum of 56.5 million francs.

\* \* \*

Negotiations between representatives of the Swiss banks and German banking, commercial and industrial firms have led to an extension of the German Standstill Agreement of 1942 by one year.

\* \* \*

At the official opening on May 5th of the 27th Swiss Industries Fair in Basle, Prof. Brogle, the Director of the fair, emphasised the importance of the fourth war exhibition. He praised the Swiss workers of both sexes for the results obtained and pointed out the difficulties under which the economy of the country is labouring. He further stated that the number of exhibitors had again appreciably increased, from 1,365 in 1942 to 1,518 this year. Unfortunately through lack of space, although the area of the exhibition had been extended, hundreds of applications could not be considered. The fair this year did not only show results achieved, but also demonstrated the aims and directions of our war economy. The particular characteristic of the fair was that it brings into relief the economic possibilities of Switzerland, even under unfavourable conditions. The number of exhibitors proved conclusively, even to the foreigner, that the initiative and the inventiveness of the Swiss is not dead, and that our industries are ready to collaborate in the economic reconstruction of Europe and the world. He also pointed out that Swiss products can hold their own against similar products from abroad and he draws the conclusion that this fair is a demon-

## CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les Membres sont avisés que

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aura lieu Mardi, le 1er Juin au Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, W.1, le dîner commencera à 6h. précises.

#### ORDRE DU JOUR:

Procès-verbal.	.....	Démissions.
Admissions.	.....	Divers.

Une conférence nous sera donnée par M. Wickham-Stead au sujet "On Switzerland."

Les Membres sont priés de s'inscrire par écrit pas plus tard que le 31 mai auprès de M. P. A. Moehr, Hon. Secr., Imperial House, Kingsway, W.C.2.. Prière de s'abstenir de téléphoner.

LE COMITE.

stration of our faith in our political independence and of our national character. Professor Brogle concluded by expressing the hope that the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle would also serve in the reconstruction of Europe.

Among the guests present were Federal President Celio, the C-in-C. of the Swiss Army, Gen. Guisan, Dr. Hoop, the head of the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein, and the consular corps of Basle. The guests were welcomed by Councillor Dr. Zweifel on behalf of the Basle authorities. He concluded his address with an appeal for absolute preparedness and united readiness on the part of the Swiss people to continue to give effective support to the authorities' measures and efforts and, if necessary, to accept further restrictions with dignity.

President Celio spoke in French. Here are some extracts from his speech: "From the day of mobilization until to-day, — and undoubtedly this will remain true in the future — the Federal Council and the C-in-C. of the Army have been united in their aims and actions, for both are inspired by the same passions, filled with the same solicitude, conscious of the same responsibility, bent upon one and the same aim — the preservation of Switzerland from encroachments by anybody who might try to touch her independence and sovereignty." Celio referred to the indispensable urgency of a sincerely neutral and strongly armed Switzerland. "The conceptions of neutrality and an Army do not exclude one another; on the contrary, they supplement each other. It is a matter of course that a defenceless Switzerland, instead of helping to restrict the existing operational areas of war on our Continent, would facilitate their extension, above all to her own detriment." In the second part of his speech the Federal President dealt with post-war problems, saying that the most important was that of providing work. The Federal Council had been dealing with the problem for a considerable time. A commission of experts had been entrusted with drawing up an extensive programme of public and private works to preserve the country from the scourge of unemployment. This programme had now been completed in its rough outlines. It consisted of road building, extension and improvement of the railway network, regulation of rivers, including the establishment of a direct link between Switzerland and the Oceans, a ten year plan for the exploitation of Swiss water-power, support for agriculture, adaption of hotels and spas to the modern requirements of the tourist trade and scientific hygiene, extension for airfields and security measures in connection therewith and, finally, the establishment of an inter-continental airport. A control of industrial and trade activities would be necessary so that the rhythm and manner of production could be adapted to the future requirements of the home industrial markets. "Our programme is thus an extensive one and the maximum amount required will be approximately 4,000 million francs. Nobody could expect such a large amount to be borne by the Confederation unaided. The special character of Swiss State institutions was precisely that the Federal Government must help to maintain them, in close co-operation however, with the Cantons and local authorities. Private initiative, too, existed as a factual and legal reality guaranteed by the Constitution. The State must act as a harmonising factor in the economic and political structure of the country, but it must never be dominant. The Con-

federation would, therefore, always be ready as a source of methodical disposition and would extend financial support wherever it acted as entrepreneur. It would be ready to contribute to the execution of a comprehensive plan, on conditions that Cantons, local authorities and private enterprise gave assistance, both in the public and private interest. Celio concluded: "The plan for combating unemployment is a work of civic solidarity for the prosperity and defence of Swiss economy as a whole. It can be realised only if all the financial resources and productive forces of the nation are mobilized."

### Cantonal

In the canton Schwyz two bills which were strongly supported by all the political parties were rejected by the voters with large majorities against. The first intended to better the conditions in the catering trade (Wirtschaftsgewerbe) by the reduction of some superfluous inns, the introduction of efficiency certificates of the proprietors and a general improvement in the working conditions of the employees. The second bill dealt with the establishment of a housekeeping school or course the attendance at which would have been compulsory.

\* \* \*

In the election of the Lucerne Grosse Rat the catholic-conservatives and the christian socialists obtained 87 seats, the radicals 57 (one more than last year), socialists 13 (same as before), and independents 10 (the latter have not been represented until now). The new council consists of 167 seats, that is 16 more owing to the increase in the population figure for the canton.

\* \* \*

In Lucerne a Committee was formed to study arrangements for the holding of a Swiss agricultural fair on the lines of the industries fair in Basle and the Comptoir Suisse in Lausanne, which would annually in the autumn show what the primeval industry of Switzerland is able to produce. Already ten years ago this project was discussed, but owing to the want of a suitable exhibition building it was deferred. This obstacle is now out of the way, the great festival hall which was built for the last federal choir competition in Lucerne being available. But there are still some differences to be settled with the Comptoir in Lausanne which for nearly 25 years has catered for the most important branches of Swiss agriculture. The Committee had its first meeting in the early days of this month.

\* \* \*

In the elections for the 180 members of the Zurich Kantonsrat to which the principle of proportional representation applies the socialists suffered a setback holding 58 seats against 68 in the former council; this loss was the gain of the "Landesring" which increased its strength from 15 to 25 members. The Kantonsrat appointed Mr. Jacob Kägi as its president and Mr. Paul Conradi its vice-president.

\* \* \*

After a heated election campaign the Regierungsrat of Zurich has been practically re-elected and consists now of Dr. R. Briner (dem.), Dr. H. Streuli (lib.), George Rutishauser (lib.), Joseph Henggeler (soc.), Jakob Kägi (soc.), Dr. P. Corrodi (Farmers), and Jakob Heusser (Farmers).

Zurich possesses for several years already a distance heating plant by which 17 school buildings, 37 hospitals and 85 private houses are heated. The shortage of coal naturally forced this vast plant to cut down productivity which is now to be made up by the construction of a heat pumping plant which is to extract heat from the waters of the Limmat. This heat pump is nothing new in principle, but it was Professor Bauer of the Federal Technical Academy who in conjunction with Swiss industrial firms developed it into practical heating installations which have already proved successful. The heat pump works in reversed order to a refrigerator, here like there the water is conducted over a cooling liquid. By compression and condensation heat is liberated which in the refrigerator is withdrawn, but in the heat pump is used to heat the water in the heating installation.

\* \* \*

In Winterthur a trial on a large scale will be made at the request of the Swiss War Provisioning Department with the so-called potato bread made from potato flour mixed with ordinary flour from which the bread for the population is baked. During several weeks the students of the University of Basle had subjected themselves to a thorough experiment of this war-bread, which proved conclusively its high nutritive and health value. Now the same experiment is being made with the population of a medium-sized town in order to gain practical experience. A general admixture of potatoes with cereal flour does however, not yet come into consideration. It may only come into question if the import possibility of wheat should deteriorate and if the next potato harvest should be very plentiful. If only a 8-10% admixture of potato flour should be used a large quantity of tubers would be necessary. For the intended experiment sufficient potatoes are available from the last harvest and the proof of the "pudding will be in the eating."

\* \* \*

At the Landsgemeinde in Glarus 5,000 voters were in the ring: Federal Councillor Etter and the Government of the canton were present. The questions on the order of the day were dealt with in accordance with the recommendations of the Government. A socialist proposal to introduce an age limit at 65 for members of the state council and the grand council was rejected.

\* \* \*

The canton of Berne has loyally justified the appellation of being a real farming district. According to the return of the cantonal agricultural department the bernese farmers produced in 1942 6,000 truck loads of ten tons each of cereals, 20,000 trucks of potatoes, 11,000 trucks of vegetables, 350,000 cwt. of meat, five million hectolitres of milk and 70 million eggs.

\* \* \*

To raise the professional education of the farmers, the canton of Berne is instituting in all its agricultural training establishments an examination. In the preparatory courses sons of farmers as well as agricultural labourers will receive instructions and gain practical knowledge. In future only pupils who have passed these courses with success or who have attended an agricultural college will be allowed to enter for these examinations. These agricultural exams are in the first place intended to improve professional handicraft, but also to inculcate professional pride in farming.

An exhibition of 19th century works of art was opened on the 1st of May at the Kunsthalle in Basle.

\* \* \*

The members of the Government of the canton of Glaris arrived in Basle, where they were officially received at the townhall. This visit was in return of the one which the council of Basle Stadt paid to the Landsgemeinde in Glaris last year.

\* \* \*

The canton of Schaffhausen had to elect a new member to the States Council. Between the candidate of all the citizens' parties, the liberal Julius Bühr and the socialist National Councillor Bringoll, a vehement election fight was raging. Although Bringoll is also Mayor of Schaffhausen, the citizens' candidate was elected by 6,498 votes against 5,875. The voting was very intent. In the town itself it amounted to 85%.

\* \* \*

On the shores of lake Constanz two pneumatic wheels of a diameter of the height of a man were washed up and which evidently belonged to a plane which returning from an attack on Munich was shot down over the lake Constanz by the German ground defence.

\* \* \*

At the Landsgemeinde of Appenzell A/Rh. the five members of the Government, who's term of office expired, were all re-elected. The accounts were almost unanimously accepted. The two vacant seats in the Government went to two representatives of the progressive citizens' party.



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The ordinary accounts of the canton St. Gallen balance with a surplus of Frs.631,484, a deficit of neraly 3½ million having been budgeted. The unexpected favourable result is due to an all-round increase in the income and economies in the administrative expenses.

\* \* \*

The protestant pastor of Marbach-Lüchingen (St. Gallen) was summarily dismissed from his ecclesiastic functions by his own flock. Dr. Steiner had officiated since 1936 but had recently fallen into disfavour with some of the parish grandees who called a church meeting at which this singular decision was taken. Since then it has been stated that an appeal has been lodged with the cantonal church council and that the pastor himself has instituted legal proceedings for defamation of character.

\* \* \*

A new basis for naturalisation has been fixed by the Grosse Rat of the canton Thurgau. In future applicants will have to produce a certificate of health and foreigners are given the right to insist on naturalisation if the conditions now laid down are fulfilled. The local commune will have no say in the matter.

\* \* \*

The title of Doctor Honoris Causa was conferred upon Mr. Anton Schmid, former States Councillor for the canton of Thurgau and a lecturer at the University of Zurich.

\* \* \*

The unusual drought has conjured up the danger of forest fires. From the Ticino news is received that fires had been raging at the same time on the Monte Bré and on the San Salvatore the two beautiful peaks in the neighbourhood of Lugano. The two burning mountains presented a frightful yet beautiful picture in the dark nights, but the first had caused considerable damage ere they could be mastered and extinguished.

\* \* \*

A sensation was caused in the canton Ticino by the arrest of a respected Solicitor. It was proved during an action for probate that he had altered the testament of a rich benefactor who had intended to benefit several communes and institutions in the canton of Ticino, by completing an incomplete date. According to Swiss law a personally drawn-up will must be written by the testator from the first to the last letter and provided with the exact date and signature. By the addition of the year to the date, the invalid will would have been valid. Now the money will go to laughing heirs, whom the testator did not wish to benefit.

\* \* \*

The Grand Council of the canton of Vaud voted a modification of the mining law in order to adjust it to present-day circumstances. It also received a motion of a demand to institute centres for the collection of

fire wood from the forests, the canton to encourage the distribution of fire wood at low prices to necessitous families.

\* \* \*

In the canton of Vaud National Councillor Gabriel Despland of Echallens (radical) was elected to the States Council with a small majority his opponent being Benjamin Schwar of Vevey. The vacancy arose through the retirement of States Councillor Louis Chamorel.

\* \* \*

In Lausanne last month 24 persons were admitted to full civic rights (naturalised), fifteen were Italians, seven Germans, and one each Russian and Swiss; including their families the increment is 55.

\* \* \*

The Palace, one of the leading hotels in Lausanne, has been partly destroyed by fire.

\* \* \*

Gustave Doret, a well-known composer, conductor and critic, died in Lausanne at the age of 77. Most of his musical career was spent in Paris where he conducted famous orchestras; as such he visited all the capitals of Europe and conducted on several occasions at the Queens Hall in London. He is the composer of a large number of musical works and wrote the music for several of our historical festivals and anniversaries.

\* \* \*

The Municipal Council of Geneva held its last meeting of its present session on 30th April. The accounts which were approved show a surplus of nine million francs. The Council gratefully acknowledged the gift of frs.350,000 from Mme Montillier in favour of painters, sculptors and musicians. Mme Aymond, who died last August in Geneva, was the widow of Mr. Reyfus by her first marriage. She subsequently married Mr. William Montillier, who, before his death, was organist and Professor at the Academy of Music. She bequeathed to the town of Geneva the sum of frs. 350,000 for two foundations. One was to be for the purchase of works of art set apart for a museum and the other for instituting a purse to facilitate the study to young musicians.

### Army

Several Government spokesmen have again stressed, during the last few weeks, the grave dangers to our neutrality which developments in the theatre of war may produce. Federal Councillor Stampfli said that "war was again nearing our frontiers." Though we possessed a well-equipped and trained army the whole of the people must be pervaded with the unshakeable resolve to use their arms against all aggressors from whatever side. Federal Councillor Kobelt, at the delegates meeting of the Swiss Rifle Association in Zug, announced that the number of army rifles handed out to the reserve had nearly doubled since the beginning of the mobilization. Evacuation of the civilian population could not take place as it would hamper the movements and tactics of the troops. Every Swiss fit to fight and fire a rifle would have to join in the defence of the country; he must belong to a defence organisation and wear an appropriate uniform or armet so as not to be treated as a filibuster. An ample supply of ammunition should be stored in every house.

\* \* \*

A foreign plane is reported to have dropped two high explosive bombs near Zurich in the night of May

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17/18th on the Seebach-Affoltern line; they did not explode and no damage was done.

\* \* \*

Three further death sentences by shooting were pronounced by the Military Tribunal 3a on the 3th inst. against Heinrich Reutlinger, aged 37, a trumpeter and gardener in Zurich; Hans Gröbli, aged 33, a corporal and traveller in Zurich; and Robert J. Klee, aged 34, a fusilier and business man abroad, born in Appenzell A.Rh. (the latter by default). They were all charged with military treason. Two others were condemned to penal servitude for life and five more to imprisonment ranging from one to twelve years, their offences being chiefly in the field of illicit military and economic intelligence service.

\* \* \*

When an army plane crashed during exercises near Rothenburg, the pilot, Lt. Peter Binswanger, aged 25, from Zurich, lost his life.

\* \* \*

All local traffic or intercourse along the Franco-Swiss frontier has come to a complete stand-still; practically the whole length is lined with barbed wire. At St. Gingolph, a small village cut in half by the frontier, a funeral cortege was stopped on the common bridge, the fence was opened for the hearse alone and the mourners were turned back.

### Rationing

The Federal Ministry of Food announced that chocolate rationing will come into force on June 10th; it will include slabs of chocolate and all confectionery as well as flour for creams, custard, pies, etc. Sweets, lozenges and sugar for the manufacture of cocoa are not rationed. The sale of these rationed goods is forbidden from May 10th to June 9th for the purposes of re-stocking.

\* \* \*

The offer of meal coupons to restaurant keepers in the cantons of Vaud, Neuchâtel and Fribourg has led to the discovery of a secret organisation which with the help of travellers sold these coupons on a large scale. In the communal food office in Fribourg alone over 110,000 coupons apart from ration cards have been feloniously abstracted by two clerks who have been arrested. Another official has been arrested at Chur (Grisons) where 30,000 coupons have disappeared. The investigation continues and it is stated that not only the distributors but the actual buyers as well will be prosecuted.

\* \* \*

The age-long battle between the Gruyère and Emmenthaler cheeses seems to have established the superiority of the former. Considerable stocks of the large-hole variety are now in reserve and in order to establish an equilibrium the War Food Office has decreed that Gruyère fanciers must at the same time purchase and consume a certain quantity of Emmenthaler.

### Traffic

It is stated that negotiations are under way between the Italian and Swiss Governments for the construction of a pipe line between Genoa and a Swiss frontier place. Steamers flying the Swiss flag are generally discharging at Genoa and the transport of oil would be facilitated and cheapened by such a pipe line.

The preliminary projects for the correction of the lake of Lugano and the Lago Maggiore and the resulting construction of a direct waterway to the Adriatic sea prepared and submitted by the respective Federal department have been agreed to in principle at a conference held in Basle with an Italian deputation.

\* \* \*

Here is an interesting report about the working of the Swiss Transit Through Spain service reprinted from the "Railway Gazette," May 14th.

"The transit through Spain of goods intended for Switzerland continued throughout 1942, despite many difficulties to which the Swiss traffic organisation was exposed, and which were attributable in the main to three factors: shortage of fuel, shortage of tyres, and shortage of goods to be conveyed. The original fleet of 19 motor vehicles was withdrawn on April 30th, 1942, after the termination of the special agreement of which it was the object. It was replaced by a fleet of ten motor vehicles operating partly on wood-gas and partly on diesel oil. The combined services of both fleets were instrumental in importing about 7,000 metric tons of goods in 1942. The average performance of a vehicle was 46,575 miles. The adverse conditions obtaining, especially regarding the regularity of supply of goods to be conveyed, resulted in unfavourable financial results, and compelled the Autotransit Genossenschaft to apply for financial assistance from the Swiss Federation.

At first the services were worked over the Badajoz-Canfranc route, in connection with the Lisbon-Entroncamento-Elvas railway service in the south; Badajoz is the Spanish frontier station, and Canfranc is the Spanish-French frontier station on the railway leading to Pau and *via* Toulouse to Switzerland. This French railway route was not under German control until about the middle of November, 1942.

After the establishment of the sea route between Lisbon and Bilbao for conveyance of goods destined for Switzerland, the connecting motor service was transferred to the much shorter route between Bilbao and Canfranc, which it continues to operate. The road distance between Badajoz and Canfranc is upwards of 600 miles, while that between Bilbao and Canfranc is only about 320 miles.

The shortage of goods for conveyance by the Autotransit service was particularly marked, while the alternative shipping route between Lisbon and Genoa was available, or the direct Bilbao-Irún-Hendaye-Geneva railway connection functioned fairly normally (as it did in certain periods). Then, the Autotransit vehicles were never loaded to capacity and were used only for very urgent consignments. When the shipping route between Lisbon and Genoa was suspended some time ago, a rule was introduced by the Swiss port

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agent at Lisbon that loading space on the Lisbon-Bilbao shuttle steamers would be allowed only for consignments of which a proportion (normally about 50 per cent.) would be re-dispatched from Bilbao by the road service instead of by rail. This relieved congestion on the Bilbao-Irún railway and assisted in securing more freight for the Autotransit route."

### **Economical**

In the first two months of this year Switzerland imported 55,000 truck loads of ten tons each of various foreign goods for which she paid 307 million Swiss frs. In 1940 for half that sum (154.5) monthly average she imported 50,000 truck loads.

\* \* \*

The total production of Swiss tobacco amounted in 1942 to 12 million kg. which were manufactured into pipe tobacco and cigarettes. With the small amount of imported tobacco added, the available quantity was sufficient to avoid rationing.

\* \* \*

In a small mine near Martigny in the canton of Valais, which is in operation only a few months, a stratum of ore has been discovered which contains a very high percentage of iron. Whilst the average iron content in European ore amounts to 55%, the newly found ore contains up to 66% which compares favourably with the best Brazilian mines. The size of the deposit has not yet been definitely ascertained, but it appears that it is a matter of large quantities. In any case the prospecting is carried out with great energy and great importance is placed upon this valuable discovery.

\* \* \*

After renewed discussions on the question of prices and salaries, the Committee of the Association of Swiss Towns decided to address a request to the Federal Council pointing out the necessity for a stabilization of prices. On the other hand the Committee supports the Federal Council regarding the price of milk. The Association of Swiss Towns would be loth to make a decision which might be causing a division between town and country-side.

\* \* \*

Of all Swiss industrial branches hit by the war, the hotel industry no doubt is hit the hardest. Compared with pre-war years the annual number of lodging nights has fallen by fully five millions to about 11.9 millions of which only 1.9 represent foreign visitors. The falling-off of the spending power of the foreign visitor for Hotel accommodation, travelling, purchases and incidentals is calculated at about 250 million frs., thus amounting for the three war years to 750 million frs. In order to keep the hotel industry alive for after the war, the Swiss Hotel Trustee Society (Schweiz. Hotelreuehand-Gesellschaft) with the assistance of the Federal Exchequer has carried through a reconstruction scheme by which a total debt of 110 million frs. was liquidated by an expenditure of 21.5 million frs. Besides this 51 hotels which were no longer vital or were antiquated with more than 3,200 beds were closed down, some even demolished. On the other hand such enterprises which promise success are being modernised with Government assistance, in order to be able to attract visitors when again normal conditions prevail.

To-day Switzerland annually produces 8,000 millions k.w. hours of electricity. She is far from using all the power provided by her numerous waterfalls. If these were fully exploited they could produce 21,000 million k.w. hours annually. An increase in output is expected if the industrial development of the country follows a normal course during the next ten years. Consumption has greatly increased since the beginning of the war owing to the coal shortage. Several new factories started in 1942 and many others are planned for the 1943/1953 period. The expected increase in the next ten years, namely 2,000 million k.w. hours, represents a yearly equivalent of 1 million tons of coal. Before the war Switzerland imported, on an average, 4 million tons of coal annually. The development of hydraulic power in Switzerland does not mean that the country will be able to do without foreign coal; on the contrary, if the development of industry demands an increase of electric power it will no doubt increase coal consumption. For a long time Swiss industry has been constructing machines, instruments, and high-precision electro-technical apparatus. The development of hydraulic power will further stimulate Swiss technicians and, after the war, more perfected instruments and apparatus will be placed on the market.

\* \* \*

Opposition is growing to the hydro-electric scheme which would involve the demolition of the three villages of Hinterrhein, Nufenen and Medels in order to create an artificial lake. At an open-air meeting the population of the Rheinwald district in the Grisons, north of San Bernardino Pass, unanimously proclaimed their right to remain on their own land and again opposed the scheme.

\* \* \*

One of the gravest agricultural problems in Switzerland during the war has been that of maintaining adequate supplies of concentrated cattle feed for winter use. Research has shown the high nutritive value of artificially dried grass, and improved drying apparatus, using surplus hydro-electric energy available during the summer, is operating successfully on a large scale. Whereas from 1.7 to 2.1 kWh. is required per pound of dry grass produced by direct heating, from 30 to 50 per cent. saving is effected by the latest apparatus with heat recuperation, and the use of hydro-electric energy on this basis is found to be attractive, especially as the same apparatus can be applied to the drying of fruit, vegetables and cereals.

### **Humanitarian**

The Swiss Red Cross has received from the Federal Council an amount of frs. 250,000 to assist special organisations abroad and foreigners in Switzerland.

\* \* \*

The International Red Cross Committee of Geneva now owns nine cargo ships flying the Red Cross flag. So far they have brought from America 100,000 tons of goods of various kinds for distribution among prisoners of war. The ships have made 151 transatlantic voyages.

\* \* \*

By a decision of the Swiss Hotel Association the members will suggest to their visitors when settling their accounts to buy a 10 cts. Red Cross stamp; the amount so collected will be handed to the special Red Cross fund in favour of child refugees of war.