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The Swiss Observer

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss electorate has rejected by a large majority two Government decrees submitted to the country for approval. The first decree provided for the grant of financial help to Swiss residents abroad who have suffered war losses. It was proposed to distribute nearly £10m. for this purpose, and the scheme was supported by nearly all parties.

The second proposal was to institute a state certificate of ability for shoemakers, hairdressers, saddlers, and cartwrights to prevent unqualified persons from carrying on these trades.

The adverse vote is explained by a growing feeling that the central Government is inclined to exercise control over too many activities, and that private enterprise should be allowed free play.

Here are the particulars of the poll:

	Certificate of ability		Help for Swiss abroad	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Zurich	40,140	91,692	59,348	70,399
Bern	29,516	44,767	36,714	35,030
Luzern	7,269	15,408	8,929	13,229
Uri	1,538	2,231	1,522	1,948
Schwyz	1,806	5,366	2,179	4,875
Obwalden	771	1,494	900	1,297
Nidwalden	876	1,725	1,101	1,482
Glarus	1,698	4,278	2,331	3,544
Zug	1,150	3,008	1,706	2,394
Friburg	4,907	5,564	5,112	5,170
Solothurn	6,998	13,348	8,231	11,856
Baselstadt	5,364	12,439	9,163	8,183
Baselland	3,579	8,718	5,058	6,914
Schaffhausen	4,303	8,375	5,251	7,066
Appenzell A. Rh.	1,930	6,315	3,323	4,765
Appenzell I. Rh.	460	821	453	805
St. Gallen	16,210	34,314	18,734	29,068
Graubunden	7,158	9,482	8,332	7,886
Aargau	18,051	48,007	22,586	41,002
Thurgau	9,081	18,078	11,119	15,344
Ticino	3,433	3,698	3,310	3,611
Vaud	8,454	15,860	10,027	13,798
Valais	3,734	4,710	3,484	4,899
Neuchâtel	5,827	13,278	8,037	10,564
Geneve	3,270	6,794	5,895	3,677
Total	187,523	379,770	242,845	308,806

Participation in poll:

Certificate of ability: 40 per cent

Help for Swiss abroad: 39 per cent

Monsieur Tschu En-lais, Premier and Foreign Minister of the Chinese Republic, and Monsieur Mendès, Prime Minister of the French Republic have paid courtesy visits to the President of the Swiss Confederation, in Berne. The distinguished visitors were entertained to luncheon at the von Wattenwyl house.

Messieurs Joseph Vincent Larrabure, and Raoul Bopp, Ministers Plenipotentiaries and Envoys Extraordinary of the Republics of Peru and Brazil, have presented their credentials to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

The Federal Council has nominated M. Henri Zoller to the post of Swiss Consul in Annecy (France). He was born in 1892 at Neuchâtel where he received his schooling. M. Zoller entered the Consular Service in 1923, and in succession occupied posts in Bucarest, Brussels and Warsaw. In 1938, he was transferred to Besançon with the rank of Vice-Consul, and from 1947-1950 he was in charge of the Swiss Consulate at Nancy. In 1948, he was promoted to the rank of consul.

Customs receipts for the month of May, 1954, totalled 61.3 million francs, or 5.9 million francs more than in May, 1953.

Receipts for the first five months of the current year amounted to 201.5 million francs, which exceeds the sum collected during the same period in 1953, by 18.6 million francs.

M. Benjamin Schwarzenbach, Swiss Consular Agent at Lagos (Nigeria) has been nominated Honorary Vice-Consul.

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Mr. Rubattel, president of the Confederation and chief of the department of public economy, has replied in Parliament to a question on American duties on Swiss watches. He emphasized that the United States was taking about 30 per cent of Swiss watch production, and that any rise in American duties might be a blow to the industry and to the 60,000 workers employed in it, especially as business now shows a tendency towards slowing down. The Swiss Government was trying to obtain some fair agreement with the United States.

Mr. Rubattel hoped that the United States would understand the urgent necessity for coming to an agreement. The raising of American duties on Swiss watches to protect the prosperous industry in the United States might be a fatal blow to American-Swiss trade relations.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. Louis François to the post of Honorary Swiss Consul in Dijon, in succession to M. Pierre Oechslin, who had occupied this position for 35 years.

M. François was born in Le Locle in 1916, and is a citizen of Montmollin (Ct. Neuchâtel). He is Manager of a chemical concern, and since 1949, has been President of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in France (Eastern Section).

Swiss authorities are investigating the reported disappearance of 30,000 dollars (10,714 sterling) in banknotes from a mailbag consigned from Geneva to Montevideo.

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 16.74 million passengers in May, 1954, or 916,000 more than in May, 1953. Receipts: 27.66 million francs (May, 1953: 24.78 million francs).

Goods traffic is returned as 1.76 million tons, which is 206,000 tons more than in May, 1953. Receipts: 33.50 million francs. (May, 1953: 28.80 million francs).

Cantonal

The celebration of the 100th year since the death of P. Alberich Zwyssig, the composer of the Swiss Hymn ("Trittst im Morgenrot daher") was held at the Wettingen monument. Federal Councillor, Dr. Ph. Etter made the principal speech. [A.T.S.]

A serious motoring accident, with the loss of five lives, occurred between Rotkreuz and Holzhäusern (Ct. Zug), when two motor-cars collided. The following were killed: Karl Frei of Zug, his sister Mina Frei, Mlle. Bachmann of Zurich, Mme. Ch. Bertola of Zurich, and Mlle. H. Richenbach of Lucerne. [A.T.S.]

Three people were killed when a privately owned Swiss plane carrying a television film of the Brazil v Mexico world football cup game crashed near Unter Ägeri (Ct. Zug). The names of the victims are: Christian Kappeler, Industrialist of Lausanne, who piloted the machine, Max Job (40) of Hedingen (Ct. Zurich), and Hans Hebeisen (36) of Zurich. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Max Ott, Director of the "Schweiz. Verrechnungsstelle" has tendered his resignation to the Federal Council, which was accepted with thanks for the services he had rendered. [A.T.S.]

M. Jean Gressot (Cons.), National Councillor, and Editor-in-chief of the paper "Le Pays" has been elected Prefect of the district of Porentruy with 3,724 votes. His opponent, Xavier Billieux (Lib.), Town clerk of Porrentruy received 3,650 votes. [A.T.S.]

At the recent elections for a Prefect for the Burgdorf district, Mr. Schenkel (B.G.B.) was elected with 3,271 votes, his opponent A. Geyer (Soc.) polled 2,662 votes. [A.T.S.]

Mm. E. Halter-Kuhn of Rorschach has celebrated her 102nd birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

M. André Béchler, a civil engineer and Industrialist of Moutier has celebrated his 50th jubilee as an industrialist. [A.T.S.]

The commune of Lavin (Ct. Grisons) has nominated Mme. Tina Truog-Saluz of Chur, an honorary citizen in recognition for her literary work. (She was born at Lavin). [A.T.S.]

On the occasion of the opening of the Federal Singing Competition in St. Gall, Monsieur R. Rubattel, President of the Swiss Confederation, conveyed the greetings of the Federal Council. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Ernest Rodel (Soc.) of Arbon (Ct. Thurgau) has been elected a member of the National Council in succession to Rudolf Schümperli (Romanshorn) who has vacated his seat. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Rolf Weber, of Arbon, has been elected President of the District Court of Arbon. [A.T.S.]

M. Albert Picot, States Councillor, and a member of the Government of the canton of Geneva, has been elected President of the "Cercle de la presse et des amitiés étrangères." [A.T.S.]

One of the methods of popularising electric cooking in Zurich is to have a daily recipe available by dialling a code on the automatic telephone system. About 1,000 calls a day are made for this recipe in the city of Zurich alone.

Switzerland had 52 per cent more tourists last year than in 1950.

Switzerland is to claim 1,828,000 francs (about £152,000) expenses for her membership of neutral commissions in Korea. The government announced.

NEWS FROM THE LEGATION

The Swiss Minister and Madame Henry de Torrenté have given a cocktail party on Tuesday, July 13th, at 21, Bryanston Square, W.1., in honour of the Théâtre de Poche of Geneva.

OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Our next issue will be published on Friday, July 30th, 1954.

We take this opportunity of thanking the following subscribers for their kind and helpful donation over and above their subscriptions: Mrs. A. Rossier, A. O. Bucher, L. Moore, F. Sohm, G. Marchand, O. Ernst, E. M. Hamilton, R. Dupraz, A. C. Baume, Ch. L. Chapuis, H. Koch, G. Senn, F. C. Lichtensteiger, H. Ott, C. de Mierre.