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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has asked Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, Swiss Ambassador in Washington, to represent the Confederation for another year, although at the end of the current year he will reach the official age limit set for retirement of Swiss Government officials. Monsieur de Torrenté has responded to this request, and consented to remain at his post in Washington for another twelve months — until the end of 1959. (Monsieur de Torrenté was Swiss Minister in London from May 1948 to June 1955.)

* * *

The Federal Council has retired Minister Charles Humbert, for health reasons, expressing its thanks for the services he has rendered.

* * *

Monsieur E. Rodriguez, President of the Senate of the Philippines, has paid a courtesy visit to the Swiss Government. He was entertained to luncheon at the "Wattenwil Haus", where several members of the Federal Council were present.

* * *

Customs receipts for the month of August 1958 amounted to 84.1 million francs, of which the Confederation receives 56.5 million francs, or 2 million francs more than in August 1957.

During the first eight months of the current year customs receipts totalled 467.7 million francs, which is 3.1 million francs less than during the same period in 1957.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 18.1 million passengers during August 1958, or 200,000 fewer than in August 1957. Receipts: 34.9 million francs (August 1957: 35.5 million francs).

Goods traffic is returned as 1.98 million tons, or 250,000 tons less than in August 1957. Receipts: 41 million francs (August 1957: 42.7 million francs).

Cantonal

Robert Schmon, of Mels (Ct. St. Gall), lost his life on an ascent of the Hoehlenstock in the district of the Grosse Windgalle. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Swissair" 30 million francs loan at 4 per cent was heavily over-subscribed, and allocations had to be considerably reduced. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. Jakob Hauser, editor of the paper "Freisinnigen" Wetzikon, has celebrated forty years of editorship. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The board of the "Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon" has declared a dividend of 6 per cent for the year 1957/58. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Kranken- und Diakonissen Anstalt Neumünster" Zurich has celebrated the 100th anniversary of its foundation. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Swiss Press Association has celebrated its 75th jubilee in Berne, on which occasion the Government of the canton of Berne held a reception at the Town Hall.

During a Banquet, which was held at the Casino, Federal Councillor G. Lepori paid a warm tribute to the Swiss Press and delivered the greetings of the Swiss Government. [A.T.S.]

* * *

At a reception which took place at the Austrian Embassy in Berne, Monsieur Coreth, Austrian Ambassador, presented Professor A. von Albertini,

Xmas Greetings

Following former years' practice we propose to publish again in our December issue a collective greeting.

The high costs of Xmas cards, should induce many of our subscribers to make use of this facility to extend to their friends the compliments of the season.

Those of our readers and friends wishing to be included should forward name and address to our office not later than Friday, November 21st, 1958, together with remittance for 10/-.

President of the Swiss Red Cross, with the golden "Verdienst" medal of the Austrian Red Cross, in recognition of the help given to Austria in connection with the Hungarian refugees. [A.T.S.]

Roland Luterbacher (24), a student of Lohn (Ct. Solothurn), lost his life on a descent from the Atels. [A.T.S.]

A fire which broke out at the works of "Panneaux forts et bois croisé S.A." at Tavannes caused damage amounting to 300,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

The paper "Emmentaler Nachrichten" published at Münsingen (Ct. Berne) celebrated its 75th jubilee. [A.T.S.]

The board of the "Bank für Internationalen Zahlungsausgleich" Basle has appointed Mr. Guillaume Louis Bernard-Guindey, until recently President of the "Société des mines de cuivre de Mauritanie", to the post of General Manager, in succession to M. Roger Auboin, who has held this post for the last twenty years. [A.T.S.]

The ten million francs loan at 3½ per cent, of the town of Schaffhausen, was largely over-subscribed. Allocations had to be reduced. [A.T.S.]

At the annual congress of the "Union Internationale des Avocats", which was held at Milan, Dr. H. P. Schmid, advocate in Basle, was elected President. [A.T.S.]

The "39th Comptoir" was opened in Lausanne on 13th September by Dr. Th. Holenstein, President of the Swiss Confederation, who was accompanied by the Presidents of the two Federal Chambers and the Federal Chancellor. [A.T.S.]

A conscientious objector (20), who refused to do military service, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment by the military court of the 2nd division (Neuchâtel). [A.T.S.]

Mme. Elisa Regamey-Delessert, of Forel nr. Lausanne, has celebrated her 103rd birthday. [A.T.S.]

The "S.A. des Ateliers de Sécheron" Geneva has declared a dividend of 5 per cent for the year 1957/58. [A.T.S.]

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

National Councillor Arthur Steiner, President of the "Schweiz. Gewerkschaftsbundes", in Berne, aged

62. The deceased had sat in the National Council since 1957, as a socialist.

Arthur Ammann-Christen, senior partner of the firm "U. Ammann, Maschinenfabrik A.G." Langenthal, in Langenthal, at the age of 69.

Max Hengartner, "Musikdirektor" in Zurich, at the age of 60. He was at one time conductor of the "Oratorienchors" Zurich, the "Liedertafel" and the "Städtischen Konzerverein" Lucerne, and until recently he was conductor of the "Kammerchor Zürcher Oberland". He was also well known as a composer.

Dr. Phil. Richard Feller, from 1921 to 1948 Professor of Swiss history at the University of Berne, in Berne, aged 81.

Traugott Wanner, from 1935 to 1948 a member of the Government of the canton of Schaffhausen, in Schleithem, at the age of 77.

Alfred Groh, since 1932 Director of the "Zofinger Tagblatt", in Zofingen, aged 64.

Konrad Fasel, geometrician of the "Sense" district, and a former member of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, in Duedingen, at the age of 75.



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Franco Panza di Maria, from 1914 to 1952 a preacher at the Italian-speaking Protestant church in Lausanne, at Lausanne, aged 81. The deceased was for many years a lecturer on Italian literature at the University of Lausanne. [A.T.S.]

* * *

LEGACIES.

The late Emile Grosjean, of Rolle, left an amount of 59,000.— francs to various charitable and religious institutions. [A.T.S.]

* * *

DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. Roesli-Boog, of Hellbühl nr. Sursee; Mr. and Mrs. E. Glaetli-Zimmermann, of Affoltern a. A.; Mr. and Mrs. K. Zwicky-Winteler, of Winterthur; Mr. and Mrs. L. Lutz-Gabathuler, of Truebbach (Sargans); Mr. and Mrs. L. Schiesser-Wichser, of Diesbach (Ct. Glarus).

Mr. and Mrs. P. Schmid-Koehler, of Weiach (Ct. Zurich), celebrated their iron wedding anniversary (65), and Mr. and Mrs. Frank-Habermacher, of Rickenbach (Lucerne), celebrated their "Steinerne" wedding anniversary (70). [A.T.S.]

* * *

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

Three persons lost their lives when two motor-cycles were involved in a head-on collision near Oberturnen (Ct. Glarus). The victims were: Walter Schelling (43), of Zurich, Robert Javel (40), of Bas-Vully (Fribourg), and J. K. Hammerschmidt (22), of Kreuznach (Germany).

A motor-car crashed into a wall in Kronbühl-Wittenbach (St. Gall). The driver, Josef Buehler (48), master painter, of St. Gall, and his sister, Mrs. Maria Schoenberger-Buehler, also of St. Gall, were killed.

A motor-cyclist, Ernst Spoerri (31), of Rothenbrunnen, collided with a lorry near Ausserferrera. He and his passenger, Julius Spoerri (68), father of the driver, were killed. [A.T.S.]

* * *

VARIOUS.

Researches undertaken early this year, after it was announced that traces of uranium had been found in the mountains of Valais, have made it clear that there are two layers containing uranium in the rocks which extend over the Great St. Bernard group. One layer is at Iserables, the other at Sarreyer. The scientists who have examined the deposits are now studying the layers with a view to ascertaining whether it would be profitable to start major works in these mountains — at a height of about 3,500 ft. — and to extract the uranium.

* * *

The winter time-table for the period from 28th September 1958 to 30th May 1959 is now available from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458, Strand, London, W.C.2, price 5 shillings.

* * *

Visitors to the Swiss glacier village and resort of Grindelwald in the Bernese Oberland can now get close up to the towering "forehead" of the imposing Grindelwald glacier by way of a newly constructed easy footpath. Part of the old trail leads through the gorge of the so-called "Lower Glacier" over a foot-bridge which was first built in 1875 and torn away many times by avalanches, rock slides and floods. The new path has been partly hewn in the solid rock and is described as "perfectly safe". Taking in the gorge on a length of several hundred yards, it affords,

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through arched openings, dramatic views of ice-age reminiscences such as glacier mills and other glacial rock formations.

* * *

Prince Karim, the young Aga Khan, has purchased a plot of land in the vicinity of Gstaad, the famous winter and summer resort in the Bernese Oberland, for the building of a holiday chalet. An architect from Berne is said to have designed the country home, on which construction is to start soon. The Aga has been among the illustrious holiday-makers at Gstaad for many years.

* * *

One of Thun's most ancient hotels, the 55-bed Schlosshotel Freienhof, situated right in the centre of the town and only a few minutes from the railway-station and the steamer landing-stage, has been completely reconstructed and is now open again. Every room has bath or shower, and the comfortable lounges overlook the picturesque River Aare.

* * *

The municipal authorities of Fischenthal in the romantic Toess Valley of the Zurich Oberland have recently turned over to the public their new community-owned Gasthof zur Blume, a typical Swiss country inn featuring not only guest rooms and two restaurants but also a combined ballroom and theatre for the villagers. The inn had been known for centuries as a favourite stop-over for pilgrims to the famous Marian shrine of Einsiedeln in Central Switzerland.

* * *

The Swiss Government recently recommended a speedy start on construction work on the planned Geneva-Lausanne highway, which was described as an "urgent necessity". Based on the new federal regulations on the improvement of the Swiss motor-road network, which were approved through plebiscite on 6th July last, the building of the 40-mile-long four-lane motor-way alongside Lake Geneva is to start early next year, and must be completed by 1964, in time for the Swiss National Exhibition at Lausanne. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 20,000 passenger cars daily will use the new highway.

* * *

The University of Geneva, with its affiliated departments such as the famous Interpreters' School and several economic institutes, is probably one of the world's most "cosmopolitan" universities, since some 60 per cent of its enrolled students are citizens of foreign countries. According to a recent survey, 4,348 students from abroad were studying at Switzerland's various universities during the summer term of last year.

* * *

A recent decision of the Swiss Federal Council now authorises coaches from abroad with a maximum width of 8 feet 2 inches to use the newly rebuilt and very picturesque Alpine road Martigny - Forclaz Pass - Le Chatelard, which connects the Lake Geneva and Valais regions with the French tourist centre of Chamonix.

* * *

Traffic noise is outlawed in the lovely little valleys of Val Roseg and Val dal Fain in the neighbourhood of the glamorous Swiss resort of Pontresina, Grisons. A general ban on motor traffic in these valleys was imposed recently.

The first "Mot-Hotel" — a combination of the traditional hotel type and a modern motel — was inaugurated recently at Sachseln, Central Switzerland. The "Touring Club of Switzerland", one of Switzerland's two leading motorists' associations, had the historic, 500-year-old "Kreuz" Inn completely modernised and supplemented by four up-to-date motel units. The "Kreuz" mot-hotel is Touring-Club's first try-out in this field; more Swiss mot-hotels are planned for Ragaz Spa, Eastern Switzerland, and Vira, Ticino.

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