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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss Federal Government has refused an East German women's organization permission to convene at Lausanne an international women's congress to oppose the projected atomic armament of Switzerland.

Customs receipts for the month of March 1959 total 82.4 million francs; of this amount the Confederation receives 59.1 million francs.

During the first three months of the current year the receipts amount to 157.3 million francs, or 3.8 million francs less than during the same period in 1958.

M. Paul Chaudet, President of the Swiss Confederation, has received in special audience two Turkish Cabinet Ministers, at present on an inspection tour in Switzerland, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne. They were afterwards entertained at a dinner by the Federal Council.

Monsieur Mario Fumasoli, at present Swiss Ambassador in Buenos Aires, has been appointed Ambassador to Spain.

M. Fumasoli was born in 1901, at Vaglio (Ct. Ticino). He studied Law at the University of Fribourg and in Germany, and entered the diplomatic service in 1925. He has occupied successively posts in Istanbul, The Hague, Buenos Aires, Rome and Madrid. In 1948 M. Fumasoli was appointed Swiss Minister to Argentina and Paraguay with residence at Buenos Aires. Later on he received Ambassadorial rank.

The Federal Council has nominated Monsieur Otto Seifert, at present Swiss Ambassador in Oslo, as Ambassador to Argentina and Minister to Paraguay with residence in Buenos Aires.

Ambassador Seifert was born in 1902, and is a citizen of Wartau (Ct. St. Gall) and Kreuzlingen (Ct. Thurgau). He entered the diplomatic service in 1934, and in succession occupied posts in Rome, Madrid and Budapest. In 1951 he was appointed Swiss Minister to

Israel, and three years later (1954) he was transferred to Indonesia in the same capacity. In 1956 M. Seifert was appointed Minister in Oslo, where he later received Ambassadorial rank.

A new Customs tariff to replace the outdated tariff of 1921 was adopted by the National Council. It will increase average import duties from the present 4.5 per cent to something over 5 per cent. The cost of living in Switzerland is expected to rise about one per cent.

Cantonal

A deficit of 408,162.— francs is reported in the accounts of the canton of Schwyz for 1958. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Obwalden for 1958 close with a deficit of 215,762.— francs. [A.T.S.]

Three youths between the ages of 14 and 17 hired a rowing boat in Lucerne for a trip on the lake. Owing to strong winds and other bad weather conditions, the boat capsized and the occupants were thrown into the water. Two of them were rescued, but the third, Herbert Heller (15), of Littau, was drowned. [A.T.S.]

The strength of the various Parties in the "Kantonsrat" Zurich, after the recent election is as follows: Liberals, 33 seats (3 gains); Peasant and Bourgeois Party, 35 seats (4 gains); Christian Socialist Party, 24 seats (4 gains); Democrats, 10 seats (7 losses); Evangelical Party, 8 seats (1 gain); "Landesring" (Duttweiler Party), 19 seats (1 gain); Socialist Party, 49 seats (5 losses); Communist Party, 2 seats (no change); Independent 0 (1 loss). Total number of seats, 180. [A.T.S.]

All the former members of the Government of the canton of Zurich have been re-elected. Here are the respective figures of the poll: Jakob Heusser (Peasant and Bourgeois Party), 82,653 votes; Rudolf Meier (Peasant and Bourgeois Party), 83,818 votes; Paul Meierhans (Socialist), 60,684 votes; Franz Egger (Socialist), 66,376 votes; Walter Koenig ("Landesring" Duttweiler Party), 55,913 votes; Hans Brugger (Liberal), 82,553 votes. [A.T.S.]

A student, Thomas Beck (21), of Effretikon (Ct. Zurich), has been killed by an avalanche. He had set out alone on a ski-ing excursion above Toerbel (Ct. Valais). When he failed to return a search party went out, and a dog found his body buried under a mass of snow. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Berne for 1958 close with a credit balance of 113,872.— francs. [A.T.S.]

The commune of Oberschrot (Ct. Fribourg) has bestowed honorary citizenship on Mr. Ferdinand Schuway, a former school-teacher, for services rendered to the commune. [A.T.S.]

The Israeli Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Joseph Isaac Linton, paid a courtesy visit to the Government of the canton of Fribourg, and the University of that town. [A.T.S.]

The Basle Fair, which was held from 11th to 21st April, was visited by 740,000 persons, amongst them visitors from 78 countries. [A.T.S.]

The Ambassador of Argentina in Berne, Monsieur Carlos Herrera, paid a courtesy visit to the authorities of Basle. He was received at the Town Hall by members of the cantonal Government. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Grisons for 1958 balance. [A.T.S.]

In the second ballot for the election of two members of the Government of the canton of Grisons, Mr. R. Lardelli (Liberal) and Dr. E. Huonder (Conservative) were elected. [A.T.S.]

Sergeant Herbert Tscherne (24), a military pilot, of Zurich, crashed with his Vampire machine near Rorschach and was killed. [A.T.S.]

A deficit of 530,952.— francs is reported in the accounts of the canton of Ticino. [A.T.S.]

Allessandro Maspoli (24), of Bellinzona, a member of the cantonal police force, was fatally wounded when cleaning his revolver. [A.T.S.]

Goods valued at several thousand francs were stolen from a jewellery establishment at the Rue de la Paix in Montreux. [A.T.S.]

Three youths hailed a taxi in Lausanne to drive them to Echallens. Shortly before arriving at their destination they attacked the driver, Louis Berloz, robbing him of 45.— francs; they then threw him into the road, where he was later found seriously hurt. The thugs then decamped with the taxi to Porly near Geneva. Two of the youths have since been arrested. [A.T.S.]

Professor Antony Babel, formerly rector of the University of Geneva, has been made an officer of the *Légion d'Honneur* by the French President. [A.T.S.]

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A motorist who caused an accident whilst under the influence of alcohol was sentenced by the Police Court of Olten to two months' imprisonment (conditional) and a fine of 1,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

According to the results of the election for the Grand Council of the canton of Thurgau, the strength of the various Parties is as follows: Combined Liberal and Peasant Party, 57 seats (no change); Combined Conservative and Christian Socialist Party, 32 seats (1 gain); Socialists, 28 seats (2 losses); "Evang. Volkspartei", 7 seats (no change). Total number of seats, 124. [A.T.S.]

On 1st April 1959 the population of the town of Lausanne numbered 121,030 (10,419 burghers of Lausanne, 51,555 citizens of other communes of the canton of Vaud, 43,977 citizens of other Swiss cantons, and 15,079 foreigners). [A.T.S.]

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Thieves broke into a jeweller's shop in the Rue de la Confederation in Geneva and stole goods to the value of 40,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Arosa Line" shipping concern, of Geneva, has gone into liquidation. [A.T.S.]

* * *

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Moritz Henneberger, former teacher of Mathematics at the "Realgymnasium" Basle, in Basle, at the age of 81.

Dr. med. François Bocion, medical practitioner, and President of the Arts Council of Bienne, in Bienne, aged 53.

Maurice Kues, author, in Nyon.

Charles Zbinden, noted architect and founder of the "Zinguerie de Renens", in Lausanne, at the age of 76.

Dr. med. Hans Christoffel, eminent psychiatrist, and from 1946 to 1949 President of the Swiss Society of Psychology, *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Berne, in Basle, aged 71.

Adolf Kreis-Singer, President of the Board of the "Grossbäckerei & Konditorei Singer's Erben A.G." Basle, in Riehen, at the age of 57.

Traugott Meyer, teacher and author, in Basle, aged 64.

Paul Brodbeck, in Liestal, at the age of 69. The deceased had been since 1924 Mayor of the town of Liestal, and since 1926 a member of the "Landrat". From 1947 to 1955 he represented the canton of Basle Country in the States Council.

Jean Seitz, well-known journalist, in Berne, aged 58.

Karl Koelle, formerly director of the "Erziehungsanstalt" Regensberg, in Zollikon-Zurich, at the age of 100.

Francois Vibert, president of the commune of Carouge, and formerly Head of the Geneva police, in Carouge, aged 61.

Arthur Frey, from 1923 to 1947 director of the Teachers' Seminary of the canton of Aargau, in Wildegg, at the age of 80. [A.T.S.]

ANNIVERSARIES.

Federal Councillor Dr. F. T. Wahlen (60), of Gmeiss (Ct. Berne). He was elected a member of the Federal Government in December 1958.

Dr. Fritz Ebi (70), of Basle, for 21 years a member of the Government of the Canton Basle-Town.

Professor Dr. Paul Karrer (70), of Zurich, since 1919 Professor of Chemistry at the University of Zurich. In 1923 he was awarded the Marcel Benoist Prize, and in 1937 he received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

Carl Müller-Landolt (90), of Zurich, since 1908 manager of the "Maschinenfabrik Rauschenbach" Schaffhausen, and since 1919 President of the Board of the "Steinmühle, A.G." Zurich. In the army he reached the rank of Colonel (cavalry). [A.T.S.]

* * *

LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.

The recently deceased Fräulein Afra Schindler, of Mollis, has left the amount of 38,000.— francs to various public utility and social institutions in the commune of Mollis.

Dr. jur. Emil Bosshart, resident in Zurich, and a citizen of Waengi (Ct. Thurgau), has donated the amount of 50,000.— francs to the church community of Waengi. [A.T.S.]

* * *

ARMY.

Divisional Colonel Rathgeb, "Waffenchef" of the Engineering Corps, and General Staff Colonel Hauser (Engineering Corps) have paid a visit of inspection to the Italian army. [A.T.S.]

* * *

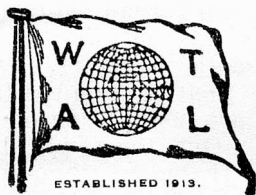
DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Beytrison, of Sitten; Mr. and Mrs. A. Ziegler-Osterwalder, of St. Gall; Mr. and Mrs. Jud-Eichenberger, of Rüti (Ct. Zurich); Mr. and Mrs. F. Demont-Brun, of Vullierens (Ct. Vaud); Mr. and Mrs. E. Schweizer-Friedrich, of Kreuzlingen; Mr. and Mrs. J. Glanaz-Rime, of Fribourg; Mr. and Mrs. E. Gaehler-Rechsteiner, of Urnaesch. [A.T.S.]

* * *

TRAFFIC ACCIDENT.

A cyclist, Edwin Halder (65), a farmer, of Oberkulm (Ct. Aargau), was killed in a collision with a motor-car at Oberkulm.



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Mr. Ernst Marti (50), a commercial traveller, of Niederlenz (Ct. Aargau), was killed when his motor-cycle collided with a lorry.

Hans Groener (51), builder's foreman, of Burgdorf, was run over by a lorry and killed.

A motor-car collided with a motor-cycle near Schmitten (Ct. Fribourg). The motor-cyclist, Marcel Schaller (35), school-teacher, of Boesingen, received fatal injuries.

Paul Urech (12), of Othmarsingen, whilst cycling, collided with a lorry at Lupfig (Ct. Aargau) and was killed. [A.T.S.]

DIVIDENDS DECLARED.

The following concerns have declared their dividend for 1958: Hero Conserven, Lenzburg, 9 per cent; Ciba, A.G., Basle, 90.— francs per share; Georg Fischer, A.G., Schaffhausen, 10 per cent. [A.T.S.]

VARIOUS.

The Federal Department of Justice and Police has expelled a clerk employed at the Polish Embassy in Berne for his espionage activities.

Two big new foreign loans involving some 110 million Swiss francs (£9m.) will shortly be floated in Switzerland. One, for 50 million francs, will be for the Danish Government; the other, for 60 million francs, will be for the International Standard Electric Corporation, of New York.

In the month of March 1959 Switzerland exported 2,774,700 watches, to the value of 79,300,000.— francs.

The Federal Gymnastic Festival will be held at Basle from 9th to 12th July 1959.

Thanks to the construction of a motor tunnel, the Great St. Bernard — which used to be known chiefly as the home of the St. Bernard dog bred by the kindly, animal-loving monks — is likely to become one of the most-travelled North-South connections through the Alps by 1961. Not only will Switzerland by then possess a fine network of motor highways; rapid and safe access will also be assured from abroad. Thus from the German side the "autobahn" will be extended down to Basel, while an Italian "autostrada" will have been completed from Genoa to the Aosta Valley at the southern foot of the Great St. Bernard. In the world-famed resort of Montreux, on the Riviera of Lake Geneva, great hopes are justly being placed in the new scenic highway. "Our town will be the favourite stopping place of the many thousands of

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Germans and Northerners who travel south in spring and autumn", touristic circles are saying. "As a section of the shortest link between Basel and Genoa, the highway through the Alps open all the year round will have a great attraction for motorists. And does not the Romans' historic military route from ancient Rome to the Rhineland deserve to acquire new importance in our age of modern, peaceful migration?" Among the steps Montreux is taking to anticipate this "migration" are the partially completed reconstruction of the lakeside promenades and roads, whose imposing landmark is the famous Castle of Chillon, the reverish renovation of the town's old-established hotels, many of which have had a modern private bath added to each room, and finally the building of three new hotels.

* * *

It is reported here that in their daily forecasts last year the "weather prophets" of the Swiss Central Meteorological Institute hit the mark in no less than 84 per cent of their forecasts. At the end of 1958 the SOMI had 130 weather observation stations throughout the country and 330 rain measuring stations. The meteorological services at the Central Institute and the two intercontinental airports, Zurich-Kloten and Geneva-Cointrin, have been equipped with special "facsimile" instruments, on to which marked weather charts can be radioed from abroad. These new instruments mean a considerable simplification, particularly for meteorological air traffic control.

* * *

As in Zurich, the necessity for a motorway through the centre of the city is being realised in the bilingual town of Biel/Bienne in order to separate local from through traffic and avoid inconvenient traffic jams. While Zurich is toying with the idea of constructing two twin-lane motorways beneath the River Limmat, the Biel authorities are planning to build their four-lane traffic artery about twenty feet above ground level along the Schüss Canal. The canal would be completely covered to ensure sufficient parking space at ground level for many years. The cost of this one-mile-long highway, which will rest on graceful supports placed at intervals of 60 feet, is estimated at 24 million Swiss Francs in all. The first stage, covering of the canal, is to be started soon.

* * *

The 1959 Swiss Summer season starts off with an increase in hotel accommodation estimated at several thousand beds, so that the total supply in the ten tourist regions of Switzerland to-day presumably amounts to more than 190,000 beds. Basel, where seven new or renovated and enlarged hotels were opened last year, is planning to build three more modern hotels. In anticipation of the 1964 Swiss

National Exhibition, at present under construction, Lausanne is experiencing a hectic building activity which has up to now produced five new and seven completely modernised hotels. Conditions are similar in Geneva, where, to take only one example, the ultra-modern Hotel du Rhône is being enlarged to 340 beds. In the Ticino, the sunshine canton of Switzerland with its famous resorts Lugano, Locarno, Ascona and Brissago, hotel building has been proceeding apace for years, the motel or motorists' hotel having recently gained favour. A showpiece of modern hotel architecture is the Wallhalla Hotel in St. Gall with its several quaint restaurants, which has just been erected on the site of a venerable inn of the same name. Not far from St. Gall, the picturesque country town of Wil has replaced its Station Hotel by a new building with almost futuristic features, which is now called "Derby-Hotel Bahnhof". Lucerne, where the "Astoria" and the "Luzernerhof" figure among the new constructions, takes just pride in the renovation of a number of its world-famed city and lakeside hotels which have partly been enlarged by the addition of annexes or superstructures, and which, like the "Carlton Tivoli", for instance, have been provided with elegant roof-garden restaurants and other innovations. On Lake Zurich the new Halbinsel Au Hotel is being presented as an architectural gem in the midst of an incomparable garden landscape, while the colourful Alexander am See Hotel brings a southern note to the lakeside village of Thalwil. Zermatt has five, Montana-Vermala two new hotels. "Motels" are being built in places like Les Diablerets and Château-d'Oex. In these two resorts of the Vaudois Alps, and also on the sun terrace of Montana in the Valais, several old hotels have, moreover, been successfully "rejuvenated" and enlarged. A splendid example of a renovated holiday palace is the recently rebuilt Schloss-Hotel in Pontresina, which offers accommodation and a maximum of luxury to 170 exacting guests.

* * *

In the presence of some of the principal actors and the Swiss "glacier pilot" Hermann Geiger, who is appearing in a feature film for the first time, the world premiere of the film "SOS Glacier Pilot" was held in Zurich. The film, produced under the direction of the young internationally renowned director Victor Vicas, describes the dramatic fate of several mountaineers distressed in difficult climbs in the Valais Alps and forced to request the assistance of the rescue pilot, who has already saved hundreds of human lives through his fearless flights. Many of the scenes were shot at heights above 12,000 feet and often meant actors and film personnel working outdoors for weeks on end, exposed to the weather in the region of eternal snow.



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