

Neutrality policy reaffirmed

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3. Switzerland transmits food parcels to prisoners of war at an average of 450,000 parcels per month. Due to recent increase in shipments the average must approach approximately 700,000 to 800,000 parcels monthly. The parcels are shipped on Swiss boats under the supervision of Swiss delegates in belligerent countries. On a recent trip from Philadelphia to France the Swiss boat S.S. "Lugano" carried 1,000,000 food parcels for American and Allied prisoners of war. Another Swiss boat due to leave in December will also carry over 1,250,000 food parcels for the prisoners of war in Europe.

4. Through its diplomatic representatives and 97 International Red Cross representatives in 47 countries, Switzerland visits camps of prisoners of war and civilian internees and sends detailed reports to the belligerents. Through these activities Switzerland is checking in every camp, where she represents foreign interests, whether prisoners of war are treated in conformity with the Convention of Geneva of 1929.

5. As a neutral country surrounded by nations at war, Switzerland has received thousands of refugees, and sends to the populations of France, Holland, Greece, Belgium, and other countries food and medical supplies.

During recent events more than 30,000 Italian soldiers and more than 5,000 Italian Jews passed the Swiss border and took refuge in Switzerland. The thousands of refugees in Switzerland, a country which is slightly over 4,000,000 inhabitants, presents a serious problem.

6. Switzerland extends relief to civilians who are not interned but reside in enemy territories. This is the case of thousands of American and British nationals who reside in Shanghai, Hongkong, Manila, etc.

It should be remembered that all the humanitarian activities of Switzerland, including the work of the International Red Cross Committee, are made possible only by the traditionally recognized neutrality of the Government of Switzerland."

NEUTRALITY POLICY REAFFIRMED.

"Our policy of neutrality is immutable. It remains unchanging toward all belligerents without consideration of their war aims or their chances of success. There is nothing conditional about the neutrality of Switzerland; it is absolute. There will be nothing symbolic about it - it will be backed up by force of arms if necessary."

In these words Federal Councillor Karl Kobelt, chief of the Federal Defence Department recently reiterated the energetic stand of Switzerland. "We cannot allow the horrors and miseries of war to hinder us in the accomplishment of duties incumbent on the country in the maintenance of its neutrality. And we will act. We are ready to resist any attack against our independence with the utmost energy, and there can never be and must never be any doubt but that we will categorically reject any demand for passage through Switzerland by troops of a foreign country. Should an attempt be made to force such a passage, we will resist with arms."

THE SWISS FEDERAL COUNCIL FOR 1944.

As already reported in our February issue, the election of the Swiss Federal Council has brought only one change, as Federal Councillor Nobs has taken the place of the former Federal Councillor Wetter. On January the 4th the Federal Council held its first meeting of the New Year. The first item of business was the distribution of the governmental responsibilities amongst the seven members. This was done without the least difficulty and in the simplest way possible. The six re-elected councillors keep all their departments and Mr. Nobs was given the department of finance, which Mr. Wetter had been carrying before his resignation.