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Ten workmen were killed when two munition depots near St. Maurice exploded; within a radius of 300 meters, trees were levelled clean to the ground and the neighbouring barracks, empty but capable of holding 600 soldiers, were completely destroyed. Fearing further explosions the inhabitants of the village of Morcle (Vaud) were hastily evacuated in lorries though only for a short time. This underground fort is part of the heavy fortifications in the Rhone valley at Dailly and was under renovation mainly to improve the housing conditions of soldiers. About twenty million francs had been spent on this fortified place; the best part of it will have to be rebuilt.

Without stating any reasons the Federal Council has prohibited the export of all arms, munitions, explosives and components of them for the next six months, i.e., till 11th December, 1946.

Unofficially it is reported that the step has been prompted by malignant and false rumours that a Geneva firm has been supplying arms to the Franco government.

The control and rationing of all kinds of paper which came into force on March 1st, 1943, has been rescinded as from the 1st June, 1946.

The long-awaited bill to introduce into our Constitution the Old-age and Dependents' Insurance is now before our two houses of parliament. In the 200-page message the following are the salient provisions: The insurance is compulsory for all and is based on a 4% contribution on actual earnings (revenue from capital invested is exempted) to be paid in equal parts by the employee and the employer from the age of 20 to 65. Single persons working on their own in a modest way pay 2½% only; exempted are wives (!) and widows unable or unwonted to earn their own living. The annuities after the age of 65 vary according to the amount of annual contributions; on a minimum of Frs. 25 or less a single person becomes entitled to Frs. 450 and a married couple to Frs. 720. The volume of the annuities favours those of the lower earning classes, thus an annual contributor of Frs. 300 (salary Frs. 7,500) can claim a yearly pension of no more than Frs. 1,500 or Frs. 2,400 respectively. There are additional pensions to widows and orphans graded according to circumstances.

SWISS RADIO BROADCASTS.

We wish to advise compatriots that the time of the Swiss broadcasts has been changed to 8 - 9.30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Saturdays. These programmes can still be heard on the 25 meter band, but our experience is that it is necessary to tune in almost to the 26 meter band.

ASSETS IN GERMANY OR AUSTRIA.

Any Swiss citizens having assets in Germany or Austria should advise the Swiss Consulate in Wellington immediately so that their interests may be safeguarded.

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