

# News from Switzerland

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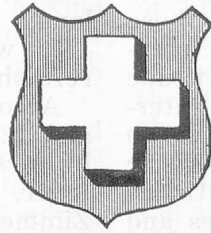
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# HELVETIA

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AUCKLAND.

## NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

### Swiss Publishing Honoured

The American Press relates in an article devoted to the second anniversary of President Eisenhower's entry into office, that among the presents given him on this occasion by the members of his staff there figured a magnificent work consisting of the eight volumes of "The Great Centuries of Painting." The President, like Sir Winston Churchill, is an amateur artist, and he greatly appreciated this fine set, which contains reproductions in colour of the masterpieces of great painters and is particularly conspicuous as a result of the beauty of this edition.

The eight volumes, bound in blue leather and bearing the President's seal, are the work of a Swiss publishing house, renowned for its artistic editions. The honour, resulting from this choice, is reflected on the whole of the Swiss publishing trade and serves to confirm its excellent reputation.

### Swissair to Receive Two New Aircraft

The Board of Administration of the Swissair recently decided to place an order for two trans-Atlantic aircraft, of the type "Douglas" DC/7C. The Swiss National Air Line Company thus affirms, once more, its determination not to let itself be out-distanced by the rapid evolution of aeronautical technique.

Already in 1932, Swissair was the first European air navigating company to put rapid American machines into service and, in 1951, it was the first to make use of the long courier aircraft of the "Douglas" DC/6B type, which at that time were the most modern to cross the North Atlantic. Today, Swissair is the first air navigation company in Europe, and the second in the world, to place an order for two DC/7C.

The very great advantage of the DC/7C resides in the long range of flight which, when there is no wind, attains 8000 kilometres, thus enabling the aircraft to accomplish the journey between Switzerland and New York (6640 kilometres) with a load of approximately eight tons, without any landing, and in all weathers. The doing

away with the necessity for landing will not only increase the comfort of the passengers, but will also considerably reduce the time of flight, without mentioning the saving it will mean in costs and in working hours. The DC/7C, which is capable of a maximum cruising speed of 580 kilometres per hour, will accomplish the flight from Switzerland to New York and back in three hours less time than any of the other aircraft in service, which, from the point of view of technical exploitation alone, signifies a very appreciable advantage.

Swissair expects to get these two machines DC/7C, at the end of 1956. Each aircraft will cost about 11,000,000 francs.

### New Ultra-Short Wave Network

Technical work connected with the setting up of a new Swiss network for ultra-short waves will be started upon already during the course of the present year. This network will gradually extend over the whole of Switzerland, the first measure envisaged being to improve receiving conditions of the national transmitters, the second having for its object a special programme broadcasted on the ultra-short waves and intended not only for the whole of Switzerland, but also for listeners in the neighbouring countries. Two transmitters are already operating, and eleven more will be put into service within the next twenty months.

### Another Swiss Protest Against Watch Restrictions

On February 11th, the Swiss Minister in Washington handed over a new Note to the Department of State, setting out once more the point of view of the Swiss authorities in regard to the anti-Trust proceedings against Swiss firms. The succession of measures, taken since the summer of 1954, which affect, directly or indirectly, the Swiss watchmaking industry, has created the impression that this is an action which aims at placing as many obstacles as possible in the way of the importation of Swiss watches into the United States. The Swiss authorities hope that if the object of these measures is to stimulate

the production of the American watchmaking industry, that the Government of the United States will have recourse to other means than those which carry with them serious obstacles to international trade. Moreover, this restrictive attitude is in contradiction with the principles of international trade, which President Eisenhower so strongly reaffirmed in his last message to the American Congress. The most recent statistics concerning trade between the United States and Switzerland confirm the justification of the Swiss claims. From them we perceive, in fact, that in 1954 Swiss exports to the U.S. declined to 640,000,000 francs as compared with 852,000,000 in 1953, whereas Swiss imports from the United States increased considerably from 619,000,000 to 710,000,000 francs.

### Record Production of Sugar

The transformation into sugar of the 1954 beetroot harvest was completed on January 6th last. Nearly 30,000 tons of sugar were manufactured at Aarberg, the only sugar refining factory in Switzerland, representing the largest annual production registered up to the present. Nevertheless, the fact remains that this quantity of home-produced sugar corresponds to only about one-sixth of the total consumption in Switzerland.

## NEWS OF THE COLONY

### Switzerland as a Fatherland

The magnetic attraction of the homeland has invited many of our settlers to make a trip overseas.

Recently back are Mesdames M. Kuchler, M. Schicker, and J. Zimmermann, also Messrs. D. Chamberlain and Maurice Schicker, of Kaponga (for them the first visit).

Messrs. J. Beeler and W. Niederberger came back happily provided with a "Schweizer frauely."

Late February saw the departure of Mr. and Mrs. F. Steiner, of Eltham, Mr. and Mrs. F. Nolly, and F. Zimmermann, of Stratford, and E. Schicker, Hawera.

Swiss settlers from America, Mr. and Mrs. Eberhart Kalin, and Mrs. B. Stumpf, came to visit their brother, Alphons Kalin, of Manaia, and other relations in New Zealand. Being interested in agriculture and business, and coming from Jacoma (quite a Swiss settlement), they have been making many interesting comparisons. Mr. and Mrs. Kalin and Mrs. B. Stumpf are proceeding to Switzerland by air before returning home.

E.G.

On Saturday evening, February 19th, there was a gathering of settlers and friends in the Bird Road School, Stratford, to say au revoir

and make a presentation to Mr. and Mrs. Nolly, who left on the 24th for a trip to their homeland.

It was a happy gathering with plenty of refreshments.

Accordian items were given by Messrs. J. Fohn and L. Schonbachler, accompanied on the piano by Mrs. J. Widmer.

Mr. and Mrs. F. Steiner, Eltham, and Mrs. F. Zimmermann, Stratford, fellow-travellers, were also present.

Piano and piano-accordian items were also given by friends.

We wish them all a happy holiday in Switzerland.

L.S.

## THE WINEGROWERS' FESTIVAL

### The Origins of the Festival

The culture of the vine in the upper basin of Lake Leman goes back, they say, to the Roman epoch. In any case, one knows that the Chapter of the Cathedral of Lausanne, in one thousand, possessed thirty-one vineyards round about Vevey and that the vineyards of Lavaux at the Dezaley had been planted in the twelfth century by the monks of the Abbey of Haut-Cret, near Oron.

In order to encourage and develop the culture of the vine, an "Abbaye" of agriculture called St. Urbain was set up in Vevey itself; the origin is lost in the darkness of centuries. This corporation, besides being interested in the growth of the vine handed out rewards to the most deserving winegrowers. At the end of the eighteenth century this "abbaye" took the name of Agricultural Society and then became the "Abbaye of the Vinedressers" and finally, in the middle of the nineteenth century, the "Honourable Brotherhood of Vinedressers." The aims have remained the same but the rewards are distributed at a three-yearly ceremony, which takes place in a day of rejoicing with a "bravade" or "parade," that is a procession through the town and a banquet. This "bravade" has become little by little a show with many participants.

Since the end of the eighteenth century, these shows became so significant that they took place every six years, then, occasionally, according to the international situation. Here, moreover, are dates of the Festivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: 1819, 1833, 1851, 1865, 1889, 1905 and 1927. Each time they became more important and several local authors and composers placed their talents at the disposal of this beautiful Festival.

### A magnificent popular Fete

The Winegrowers' Festival, "a national masterpiece" as the Swiss poet, Juste Olivier, has called it, glorifies the daily work of Mother Earth. In a glamorous evocation of Nature, it exalts the peaceful activities of our people.

It is above all a drama which brings into evidence the art of the painter, of the musician, of the poet and of the dancer, a brilliant hymn