

# Twenty years of social peace in the Swiss machine industry

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tray. Bake in medium heat. Trim ladyfingers so they are square ended. Make a boiled custard from 1-3 pint of milk, 1 dessertspoon of gelatine (dissolve in a little water before adding to warm custard). Dissolve 2ozs. dark chocolate and mix with half of the custard. With other half mix 2 tablespoons sugar glazed fruit (fruit confit) 1 tablespoon pineapple pieces and 1 tablespoon of schnaps, preferably "Kirsch"). With both parts of custards mix finally a cup of whipped cream. When custards start to set spread them in layers over the biscuits. Decorate with pretty pieces of fruit and whipped cream. When quite stiff, remove rim carefully and serve.

MRS. H.B.

Send your favourite recipe to the secretary.

#### MILITARY TAX REVISION FOR SWISS CITIZENS ABROAD

With a view to obtaining suggestions and learning the viewpoint of the people concerned, a Circular was sent out by the Vice-Consul in Wellington. The gesture was widely appreciated because a similar procedure was never adopted before.

Although a revision was overdue and the relief not as good as expected in some cases, most of our people appreciated the termination of payments after being abroad for ten years, respectively five years in the higher age group. Also the revoking of the expectative is a good and worthwhile relief, especially because this always was a bit of a sore point and caused a lot of heart-burn and illwill. On the other side of the ledger, however, not enough consideration seems to have been given to active and instructions service.

WALTER RISI.

President of the Swiss Society of New Zealand (Inc.).

#### ARMY

The Swiss army is storing blood for use in a possible war. Two subterranean laboratories will process, store and distribute Switzerland's emergency blood supplies. One of them, shielded from nuclear blasts beneath 100 feet of rock at Zweilutschinen, is already producing plasma.

The other underground installation at Amsteg (Ct. Uri) will go into operation later this year.

At Zweilutschinen the army converted an abandoned munitions depot into its new blood bank.

The Swiss army estimates that it would need 100,000 packages of plasma in time of war. Since the Red Cross blood centre at Berne deals primarily with civilian needs, the army has constructed the Amsteg and Zweilutschinen laboratories for itself, although they are staffed by Red Cross personnel.

#### SWISSAIR OPENS SECOND FAR EAST SERVICE

Following the opening in April of a new route to the Far East terminating in Tokyo, Swissair have now introduced a second weekly service leaving Zurich and Geneva on Fridays and calling at Calcutta and Hong Kong, instead of Bombay and Manila, which continue to be served by the original flight.

#### WEDDING BELLS

We have much pleasure to announce the marriage of our past Secretary, E. Gilgen. He was married on September 7 in the Unitarian Church, Ponsonby, Auckland. We wish both our very best for the future.

—A.B.

#### SWISS COMPANY FOR ATOMIC POWER PLANT

Considering that it appertains to the existing business undertakings to exploit atomic energy for the supply of electric power, four big Swiss companies, engaged in the production of electricity have just founded a joint-stock company, in Berne, under the name of "Suisatom." This new company will start a share-capital of six million Swiss francs. The "Suisatom" intends to pursue, without delay, the studies which have already been begun in regard to the building of a power station for tests, possessing a capacity of 10,000 kilowatts. After the tests have taken place, then the company will build an atomic plant for the regular production of electric power.

#### TWENTY YEARS OF SOCIAL PEACE IN THE SWISS MACHINE INDUSTRY

It was on July 19, 1937, that the so-called "Labour Peace" Convention was signed by the Swiss Employers' Associations and the various Swiss Trade Unions of the machine and metallurgical industries. This Convention, whereby the contracting parties bound themselves not to have any recourse to fighting measures in order to obtain their claims, has assured remarkable stability to social conditions in Swiss industry, for the last twenty years. Concluded, at first, for an experimental period of two years, it has already been renewed four times, namely in 1939, 1944, 1949 and finally in 1954 for a new five-year period, which expires on July 18, 1959. It is very rare, indeed, that contractual understandings between employers and workers have lasted for so long, without any change in the basic principles. There can be no doubt about it that the reason for this longevity comes from the long-term views of the authors of this Convention, who strove to produce a new state of mind and to place the general interests above the personal interests of the men

who were working in the same plants. More than 150,000 workers and employees enjoy the benefits of this Convention which has also rendered appreciable services to the country.

#### **FIFTY WAGONS ORDERED IN SWITZERLAND BY THE MEXICAN RAILWAYS**

It has just been learnt that the Mexican Railways have signed an important contract, amounting in value to three million two hundred thousand dollars, with a Swiss firm. This contract provides for the delivery by the said firm of fifth postal wagons. Deliveries are to start in February, 1958. This business deal is the only one to have been concluded this year by the Mexican Railways, with any European country.

#### **SWISS CHOCOLATE APPRECIATED ALL OVER THE WORLD**

In 1956, the production of chocolate in Switzerland attained a record figure. It amounted to more than thirty-five million kilos of chocolate in tablet form, thus exceeding by more than sixty thousand kilos, the record figure achieved in 1915, and never equalled since then. From 1955 to 1956 the production of Swiss chocolate increased by 20 per cent. The consumption of chocolate per head of the population is higher in Switzerland than in any other country, coming even before Great Britain and Belgium. As for exports, these also show a satisfactory development. Thus, in 1956, exports amounted in weight to almost 6.5 million kilos, and in value to 35.5 million Swiss francs; there was an increase of more than ten million francs, in comparison with 1955. Last year, Switzerland exported her chocolate to some ninety different countries.

#### **A FOREIGN MINISTER PRAISES THE SWISS FRANC**

Recently, during a public speech at Loerrach, the Finance Minister of the German Federal Republic spoke in praise of the Swiss franc. He had already drawn attention to the stability of Swiss currency, in 1949. Today, eight years later, the purchasing power of the Swiss franc has only declined by eight per cent, whereas that of the dollar has gone down by fourteen per cent, during the same lapse of time.

#### **SWITZERLAND'S COMPARATIVE FREEDOM FROM LABOUR TROUBLES**

Ever since Switzerland's metallurgical and machinery industries find the so-called "Labour Peace" agreement some twenty years ago, collective labour contracts have been increasing considerably in number. By the end of last year more than 1500 of them had been drawn up governing the working conditions of over one million workers

and office staff. This great increase in the number of labour contracts has been followed by a corresponding decrease in the number of strikes and each other labour disputes. Between 1927 and 1936 there were on an average 32 strikes each year, representing a loss of more than 90,000 working days. These figures have fallen off considerably, as is shown by the fact that last year work was stopped on only five occasions, with a total loss of 1400 working days.

#### **A NEW PLANT IN SWITZERLAND FOR THE CHEMICAL TRANSFORMATION AND USE OF SAW-DUST AND OTHER TIMBER WASTE**

A joint-stock company has been established in Fribourg, for the purpose of setting up and running a plant for the chemical transformation of saw-dust, and also, of other timber waste, which comes from the Swiss firms engaged in the timber trade. At present, the only plant of this kind in Switzerland is that of Domat-Ems, in the Grisons.

#### **NIGERIAN STUDENTS STAND A PERIOD OF PRACTICAL STUDY IN SWITZERLAND**

A certain number of coloured students from Nigeria are staying at present in Switzerland. These are young men and girls who are studying in Great Britain and to whom the "Swiss Aid to extra-European countries" has offered the possibility of a visit to Switzerland, in order to enable them to get into touch, in the practice of their speciality, with European life. The friendly relations which are thus being established with the future intellectual elite of a country which will be independent in two years' time, cannot but prove to be favourable to future relations between Switzerland and Nigeria.

#### **RADIO-ACTIVITY IN SWITZERLAND**

Radio-activity has increased in Switzerland, both in the air and in the waters; this is what we learn from the first Report of the Commission set up by the Government to go into this matter. For the moment, however, the increase in question is not such as to give rise to any anxiety. On the other hand, the radio-activity to be found in the precipitations has recently attained dimensions which can no longer be considered as being inoffensive, especially in those regions of the country where the only drinking water available to man and beast is that obtained from the rains, by means of devices which collect it into cisterns. This water might prove harmful if it was drunk over a long period. Research work is going to be started with the object of discovering a means to ward off this danger. The Commission is now going to devote its studies to finding out the degree of radio-activity which exists in the soil and in milk.