

News from Switzerland

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● NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND:

To Prevent "Alienation"

It is difficult to believe, initiatives No. 4 and 5 are already looming on the horizon. Initiative No. 4, launched by James Schwarzenbach's Republican Movement, has collected 53,800 signatures — 50,000 are sufficient — and has been handed in to the Federal Chancellery in Berne. Initiative No. 5 is conceived as a kind of political and moral counterweight against its forerunners and has been launched by the Movement of Catholic Workers and Employees. It postulates, amongst many other things, social security and the right of every foreign worker, including the "saisonniers" (who are only in the country for 10 months) to have their families by their side. With the exception of the active and passive voting right this fifth initiative wants to put foreign workers legally on exactly the same footing as the Swiss citizens. The collection of signatures for this is just about to begin.

All this shows that the problem of the presence of an admittedly large number of foreign workers amidst a not always very welcoming indigenous Swiss population will be on the agenda for debate and discussion not only during the current year but for some time to come.

The Swiss — and here I am quoting the well-known author Max Frisch — have wanted foreign labour to come in and help produce wealth, and are now forced to admit that these foreign workers are human beings whose rights and dignity they have to respect.

There is an awareness in Switzerland that after the women's franchise in Switzerland the required number of 50,000 sign for a referendum should now be doubled.

Foolproof Protection Against Electrocution

With electrical power requirements continually growing, short circuits in high tension networks are becoming increasingly numerous and accidents due to careless manipulations more and more frequent. It is extremely important therefore to cut down the risk of accident by using suitable safety devices. A firm at Wollerau (Schwytz—Switzerland) has produced a high voltage tester of entirely new design; built according to all the latest techniques, this appliance rules out any faulty manoeuvre on the operator's part. Its simplicity of operation and very great accuracy are guarantees against any risks of error in manipulation or interpretation of the readings. The tester, which is fitted with a self-testing device, is available for any voltage required; the detecting head is mounted on a single insulated rod. A luminous optical signal, visible from far even under unfavourable conditions, indicates very clearly whether the conductor is live or not. In addition, this new device has the advantage of possessing an automatic on/off switch, ensuring long battery life and maximum use. Light but sturdy, this tester complies with all Swiss and foreign standards. (SODT).