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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

KIDNAPPING OF A GERMAN REFUGÉE IN SWITZERLAND.

A German was arrested at Ascona, in the canton of Tessin, on a charge of being concerned in the disappearance from Basle on March 9th of Dr. Berthold Jakob.

Dr. Jakob had been living in Strasbourg since he left Germany in 1932 and had been deprived of his German nationality by the Nazi Government. He had an extensive knowledge of the facts concerning German rearmament, about which, it is said, he possessed important documents, and he ran at Strasbourg a press agency called the "Service Indépendante Presse," which specialised in German military information. He had been warned more than once by the French police that the Gestappa was particularly anxious to get hold of him. The last warning, it appears, was given just before he left Strasbourg for Basle on March 9th.

The following is the story of the kidnaping of Dr. Jakob. The chief of those who carried out the plot is described as "Herr X."

On March 4th a German, Herr "X," with whom Dr. Jakob was acquainted, paid a visit to him at Strasbourg and urged him to go to Basle to meet a "trustworthy person" who could give him exact information about the present state of German armaments. Dr. Jakob suggested that the meeting should take place in Strasbourg, but was told that Basle would be more convenient. On March 6th "X" went to Paris, whence he telephoned to Dr. Jakob on March 8th that the meeting at Basle was fixed for the next day, and that the "trustworthy person" was staying at an hotel at Basle. Dr. Jakob left for Basle next morning, and "X" also arrived at Basle on March 9th. On his arrival in Basle Dr. Jakob saw a friend, Dr. Herzog, and told him that he had an important appointment that day with a German acquaintance, and would see him (Dr. Herzog) the next day.

Dr. Jakob did not turn up the next day, and has never been seen since. On March 10th Frau Jakob received at Strasbourg a telegram purporting to come from her husband saying that he would return the next day. On March 11 she received another telegram, dispatched from Zurich, saying that Dr. Jakob was going to Geneva and would be back in Strasbourg on March 14th. As he did not arrive the Swiss police were informed. They ascertained that Dr. Jakob had never been to Zurich or Geneva, that the telegrams received by his wife were not sent by him, and that he had not stayed at any hotel in Basle. They also ascertained that he visited "X" at a Basle hotel, but when the police went to see "X" they found that he had left Basle, saying that he was going to Paris. The police then telegraphed the description of "X" all over the country.

Meanwhile the Customs officials at Kleinlueningen, on the frontier between Switzerland and Germany, reported that at 8.50 p.m. on March 9th a Zurich car passed the frontier into Germany without stopping. The Swiss officials, who thought that the car contained smugglers, took its number, so that it has been identified. It was hired from a garage in Zurich one day last week by two Germans who seemed to be liberally supplied with money and said that they wanted it for five days. They have been identified. One of them stayed at a Basle hotel. He appeared to be in possession of a first-class free pass on the German railways. The other stayed at another hotel in Basle. On March 11th the Zurich firm were informed by telephone that they could fetch their car from Loerrach, in Germany, and they sent an employee, who brought it back.

The Swiss police do not doubt that Dr. Jakob was carried off into Germany in the car that passed the frontier at Kleinlueningen on March 9th.

CHRISTIAN KUNZLE ALPINE HOMES.

To further the scheme for assisting patients needing such treatment as is offered by the Christian Kunzle Alpine Homes, a meeting was held in the Armstrong Siddeley Rooms, Coventry, last week. The meeting was well attended, representatives being present from the following works: G.E.C., Coventry Corporation Gas Department, Dunlop, Alfred Herbert, Ltd., Rudge Whitworth, Morris Engines, Bushills, Renold and Coventry Chain, Armstrong Siddeley, B.T.H., Standard Motor Co., Cash's, and the Coventry City Police.

The main object of the meeting was to consider the best means of subscribing to a central fund, and the matter was discussed mainly from the point of view of an equal subscription from all interested, or a subscription based on the number of employees. It was eventually agreed that a recommendation from the meeting should be made that the subscription be based on 6d. per employee per year. The opinion was expressed that, no doubt, in addition to such subscriptions, independent donations would be welcomed. Concrete evidence had already been provided of patients treated in Switzerland, who had returned cured, and after several years' tests no trace of the disease could be found.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The death is reported from Zurich-Zollikon of the well-known Swiss authoress Lilli Haller at the age of 60. Lilli Haller was born in Berne in which town she received her school and University training. After an extensive stay in Russia, she returned to Berne where she was for many years a teacher at the "Töchter-Handelschule." After retiring from her position for reasons of health, she settled down in Zollikon near Zurich. Some of her best known works are her novels "Die Stufe" and "Frau Agathe Sommerhaus," the biographical study of Julie Bondeli, the work "Die Schweiz im deutschen Geistesleben" etc.

BERNE.

The wood-carving school at Brienz has celebrated its 50th anniversary since its foundation; on this occasion a Banquet was held at which members of the cantonal government took part, a sum of 1,000 frs. was given to the school as a present from the Bernese government.

In Berne, died at the age of 69, M. A. Aellig, late General Manager of the Cantonal Bank in Berne. At the age of 19 he entered the Bank as an apprentice, and for the last 20 years (he retired at the end of 1934) he held the post of General Manager, during all these many years he has rendered great services to the institution, and his work was especially mentioned on the occasion of the centenary festivities of the Bank, which took place last year.

LUCERNE.

Dr. Jakob Sigerist, States Councillor and member of the cantonal government has died in Lucerne at the age of 66.

Dr. Sigerist was born in 1869 in Mettlen near Eschenbach; he received his schooling in Sarnen, and later on he studied law at the Universities in Strassburg, Munich, Berne and Fribourg. On conclusion of his studies he established himself as an advocate in Hochdorf; in 1900 he was elected a member of the Tribunal, which post he kept until 1904 when he was appointed "Amtsstatthalter." Four years later he entered the cantonal government of which he was a member for the last 27 years.

Dr. Sigerist entered Parliament in 1920, and presided over the States Council three years ago. The canton of Lucerne and Switzerland lose in Dr. Sigerist one of their distinguished sons.

URI.

M. Martin Gamma, a former Landammann and National Councillor, has died in Altdorf at the age of 80.

SCHWYZ.

The late M. Karl Dober, "Sparkassen-Verwalter" at Küssnacht has left an amount of 10,000 frs. to be distributed amongst charitable institutions.

BASLE.

Only three members out of seven were elected in last week's election for the cantonal government. The three members are: G. Wenk (socialist); Dr. F. Hauser (socialist); Dr. E. Zweifel (radical); a second ballot for the four remaining seats will have to be taken. The strength of the parties in the new Grand Council are as follows: Radicals 22 (late council 24); Liberals 15 (17); Catholic Pop. Party 13 (14); Nat. Pop Party 11 (14); Evangelical Party 3 (4); Indep. 1 (0); "Freiwirtschaftler" 3 (0); Socialists 46 (38); Communists 16 (19).

GLARUS.

The Brewery firm, Erlen A. G. in Glarus has earmarked an amount of 100,000 frs. for creating a benevolent fund for their staff.

TICINO.

A post-bag containing 18,600 frs. disappeared on the way from the station at Lugano to the Post Office, three men have been arrested, one of them an employee of the Post Office. The missing money has not yet been found.

FOOTBALL.

24th March, 1935.

NATIONAL LEAGUE.

Chaux-de-Fonds	.....4	Basel	.....2
Servette	.....3	Concordia	.....1
Young Boys	.....0	Young Fellows	.....3
Biel	.....6	Carouge	.....0
Lugano	.....2	Bern	.....1
Nordstern	.....1	Locarno	.....2
Grasshoppers	.....3	Lausanne	.....0

Grasshoppers' decisive victory over Lausanne by three clear goals once again depose the latter from the head of the league table, the champions Servette taking their place with a lead of one point and a match in hand. Lugano put a stop to Bern's all conquering career and thereby keep third place, three points behind Lausanne. That young "fellows" should beat young "boys" lies in the nature of things, yet more was expected from Y.B. after their recent successes. Still, as Concordia also lost, Y.B. keep their advantage of 5 points intact and that should be good enough to save them from relegation, although they look like ending up in not a very dignified position in the league. Carouge's record is appalling. After 20 games they have one win and two draws to their credit, they have scored ten (1) goals and conceded 78. If that represents the level of First League football, and after all, Carouge were worthy leaders in their group last year, then we can only congratulate Kreuzlingen for having had the courage to refuse promotion to the higher circle.

And Luzern have lost their second match in succession, but as St. Gall also obliged once, the position is unaltered, Luzern leading with 22 points from 15 games, St. Gall, played 13, 18 points, Brühl, played 14, 18 points Chiasso, played 15, 18 points close behind. In the other group of the First League, Aarau met their closest challengers, Olten, and beat them to the tune of 7:1. Shades of the boys in blue of Stamford Bridge! They also put up that score quite recently. Oh yes, I know it was but once; if it did happen more frequently, no one would mention it! So, please don't do it again in a hurry!

M.G.

A PROPOS DU MESSAGE FEDERAL SUR L'INITIATIVE DE CRISE.

Les auteurs de la ruineuse initiative de crise se sont bien gardés d'établir un programme financier pour la couverture des énormes dépenses qu'ils exigent de la Confédération. Ils exigent que l'Etat fédéral combatte la baisse générale des salaires et celle du prix de la production agricole et artisanale. Il est clair, dit à ce sujet le message du Conseil fédéral, que cette disposition vise également les traitements et salaires des fonctionnaires, employés et ouvriers de la Confédération, des cantons et des communes. Il est superflu d'insister sur les effets qu'aurait cette mesure pour la Confédération, en particulier pour ses établissements en régie.

D'autre part, l'expérience a démontré que le soutien des prix entraîne, lui aussi, de grands sacrifices financiers. Mais l'initiative s'inspire semble-t-il de l'idée que les sacrifices consentis jusqu'ici dans ce domaine doivent être encore plus considérables.

De plus l'initiative exige de la confédération qu'elle protège les salaires et les prix de manière à assurer un revenu du travail suffisant. Cette disposition a une grande portée financière, en ce sens que la Confédération devrait intervenir chaque fois que les salaires et les prix ne pourraient pas être maintenus.

L'initiative exige encore de la Confédération qu'elle procure du travail par un effort méthodique. Ses auteurs réclament un programme passablement plus vaste que celui qui est prévu par l'arrêté fédéral du 21 décembre 1934. Le message rappelle à ce propos que le Conseil fédéral a toujours estimé qu'une certaine réserve s'impose dans l'exécution de travaux de secours. En effet, notre économie est surcapitalisée. Il faut se garder d'y engager de nouvelles sommes qui ne produiraient pas d'intérêt et ne pourraient être amorties. Notre pays a exécuté des travaux importants pendant ces dernières dizaines d'années, la correction des rivières et des ruisseaux est achevée, des routes de montagne ont été construites, le réseau ferroviaire fédéral et privé est déjà beaucoup trop dense, la production des usines électriques laisse un excédent inutilisé. Dans ces circonstances, il est difficile de trouver des travaux ayant réelle valeur productive.

Il est absolument impossible de se faire une idée exacte de l'importance des sommes exigées par l'initiative. Mais il est permis de penser, estime le Conseil fédéral, que l'adoption de l'initiative par le peuple serait interprétée comme une victoire des partisans d'un vaste programme de travaux à créer artificiellement.

Mais l'initiative ne s'arrête pas là dans les charges nouvelles qu'elle entend imposer à la Confédération. Celle-ci serait obligée, en plus, de dégrever les entreprises agricoles surendettées, d'alléger le service des intérêts hypothécaires, de dégrever les entreprises artisanales tombées dans la gêne.

Un projet présenté par l'Union suisse des paysans en janvier 1935 et visant au désendettement de l'agriculture prévoit à lui seul une mise de fonds d'un milliard environ. Les dégrèvements agricoles prévus par l'initiative absorberaient des sommes beaucoup plus considérables.

Quant au désendettement artisanal, il faudrait l'étendre aux petits commerçants et aux entreprises industrielles.

Enfin, l'initiative prévoit que la Confédération garantirait une assurance-chômage et une aide de crise suffisantes. Cette disposition, fait observer le message, demande sans aucun doute que l'on s'abstienne de toute réduction de l'assurance-chômage et de l'aide de crise et que, cas échéant, on fixe des taux plus élevés.

L'adoption de l'initiative aurait pour conséquence d'amener une forte augmentation de ces dépenses qui, en 1933 et seulement pour la Confédération, furent déjà d'environ 36 millions de francs.

Un succès de l'initiative susciterait des appétits innombrables auxquels les Chambres, vu le vote affirmatif du peuple, n'auraient guère la force de s'opposer d'une manière efficace. Ce serait le début d'une surenchère effrénée. La dépense totale se traduirait en milliards et non plus en millions. Comment évaluer cet accroissement annuel des dépenses? Un calcul définitif ne saurait être fait, faute des éléments nécessaires. Mais, d'après ce que nous savons et vu les courants qui se manifestent aujourd'hui déjà, vu surtout la ferme volonté de venir en aide qui se dégage de l'initiative et qui procède de l'idée que l'Etat est tout-puissant et dispose de ressources inépuisables, il s'agirait, en millions de francs, de nombres à trois chiffres, dont on ignore quel serait le premier.

Comment se procurer les sommes nécessaires? L'initiative observe à ce sujet un prudent laconisme. Elle se borne à prévoir un prélèvement à opérer sur les recettes courantes, la création d'obligations à prime, l'émission d'emprunts.

Or, le prélèvement sur les recettes courantes est chose impossible, car il n'y a pas de recettes disponibles. Le compte d'Etat pour 1934 accuse un déficit de 30 millions, malgré la compression des dépenses et le programme financier. Le budget pour 1935 prévoit un déficit de 41 millions.

Il est extrêmement difficile de créer de nouvelles recettes. En impôts et contributions, le peuple suisse paie aujourd'hui un milliard de francs. Pour ce qui est des impôts de consommation demandés par ce qui réclament le plus l'aide de l'Etat, une forte imposition ferait augmenter le coût de la vie à une époque où le nombre des chômeurs augmente et où la Suisse a un intérêt incontestable à diminuer le coût de sa production.

Reste le Moyen de l'emprunt.

Nous n'avons éteint qu'une modeste partie de notre dette, puisque celle-ci s'élève, pour la Confédération à environ 1.7 milliard. La dette des C. F. F. s'accroît chaque année d'une somme très considérable. Enfin, ceux qui prétendent que notre économie dispose encore de grandes réserves s'illusionnent eux-mêmes et méconnaissent complètement la véritable situation économique. La Confédération, les cantons et les communes exploitent déjà tous les impôts imaginables. Le capital s'amointrit, les dépôts d'épargne vont en

diminuant, de grosses pertes se sont produites. Il faut s'attendre à d'autres.

Tout accroissement des emprunts publics finirait par arrêter la baisse du taux de l'intérêt.

Si l'endettement de la Confédération s'accroissait, l'étranger qui observe avec méfiance l'évolution de la crise en Suisse, ne manquerait pas de saisir cette occasion et de spéculer à la baisse sur le franc suisse. Le fléchissement de la confiance dans le franc suisse aurait pour conséquence de forts retraits d'argent, des retraits de dépôts étrangers et la théaurisation de l'or.

Quant à savoir si la Confédération doit émettre des obligations à prime, c'est une question d'ordre secondaire. L'emprunt à prime est une forme de la dette consolidée. Il a le caractère de loterie. En émettant les emprunts à prime, l'Etat exploite la passion du jeu pour satisfaire ses besoins en capitaux. Les Etats recourent à ce moyen en des temps où le crédit public est ébranlé, où la situation politique est troublée ou lorsque les finances sont dans le marasme.

Un peuple ne peut pas inscrire comme bon lui semble dans sa Constitution des revendications et principes d'ordre économique et financier. Au-dessus des lois écrites qui régissent un Etat, il y a des lois économiques immuables, dont personne ne saurait briser la puissance. Le peuple qui se donne une législation éloignée de la raison et du possible se ménage des déceptions et devra se rendre compte que l'on ne peut pas lutter contre des lois qu'imposent inévitablement les phénomènes économiques.

SWISS MUSICIANS AT THE LEGATION.

The London Contemporary Music Centre, British Section of the International Society for Contemporary Music, a very active organisation whose high aim it is to present compositions of living musicians of all nations to its members and sympathisers, has by the courtesy of Madame Paravicini been enabled to give a most interesting concert of contemporary Swiss music in the salon of our Legation at Bryanston Square on Tuesday last week. As the organising Society has several hundred members it was not possible to invite any outsiders apart from the press. This is greatly to be regretted because both the programme and the quality of the performance were of very high distinction and of the greatest musical interest.

The programme comprised two violin and piano sonatas, one by the well-known composer Othmar Schoeck of Brunnen and the other by Walter Schulthess of Zurich, a cycle of French songs by Jean Binet, and a cycle of German songs by one of the most modern and individualist composers of our country, Willy Burkhard of Berne. The executing artists were Madame Stefi Geyer (violinist) of Zurich, Franz Josef Hirt (pianist) of Berne and our Madame Sophie Wyss (soprano), who has done so much for Swiss music in London and who was instrumental in making this concert possible. The two artists from Zürich deservedly enjoy the highest reputation in musical circles far beyond our home country, and we understand that their visit here was partly made possible by the aid of that great Maecenas of Swiss art, Werner Reinhardt of Winterthur. The artistic result of all this trouble in organising this concert was well worth the effort of everybody concerned, even though one might have wished for a very much bigger audience.

While the two violin sonatas were received by the audience with warm applause on account of the compositions as well as the wonderfully accomplished performance by Madame Geyer and Mr. Hirt, much the most interesting item in the programme was the group of songs by Burkhard which was accompanied by the violin and the piano as well as a 'Cello, played by James Whitehead. Burkhard's attempts to express and translate into music the delicate feelings for nature's beauty of some poems by Christian Morgenstern as simply and as untrammelled by musical traditions as possible. The effect is sometimes a little vague and forlorn, but he achieves a surprisingly simple and direct appeal to the ear and the heart of the audience. The demands his compositions make on the performing artists are, incidentally, extremely high, and the perfect rendering given at the concert by our compatriots and the English 'Cellist, who had only been able to rehearse once or twice is therefore a particularly fine achievement. The French songs by Jean Binet were of a more conventional order but they were also very well received.

After the concert at the Legation Madame Paravicini and our Minister gave a delightful intimate supper party in honour of the artists, at which were also present: Count Benckendorff, son of the former Ambassador of Imperial Russia in London, Countess Benckendorff, who is the famous harp player, née Marie Korchinska, Mr. and Mrs. Hart, the latter being the organising secretary of the Contemporary Music centre, Mr. and the honourable Mrs. Talbot, Miss Livia Paravicini, Captain Gyde, Madame Wyss's husband, M. Christian Darnton, the composer, and Dr. Egli.

Madame Paravicini and our Minister, who showed the artists the most generous hospitality, have taken the opportunity to enable them to give a performance for a larger and very select audience at the Grosvenor House on Thursday evening this week, composed of members of the British Government, Parliament and English Society as well as many members of the Diplomatic Corps in London. The Swiss artists appreciate this opportunity most warmly, which is a very valuable occasion for making known a little more of the high musical qualities emanating from our country. Madame Geyer and Mme. Wyss have also secured an engagement with the B.B.C., and the former has given a recital of her own at the Aeolian Hall on Thursday this week.

Dr. E.

MADAME PARAVICINI'S RECEPTION.

Madame Paravicini held a reception on Thursday, March 21st, in honour of the Members of H. M. Government, the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Corps, in a private suite at Grosvenor House. The arrangements for this distinguished gathering were in the hands of our compatriot M. Devigné, Manager of the Grosvenor House and M. Gibbs, the Banqueting Manager, (the latter although an Englishman has the distinction of having a Swiss mother) and they were carried out most efficiently.

The guests included members of the cabinet, high officials of various Government Departments and the Foreign Office, the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress; the Diplomatic Corps was represented by nearly all the Ambassadors and Ministers, accredited to the Court of St. James. The Speaker of the House of Commons, the Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps, and Members of Parliament were amongst the 200 guests.

Madame Paravicini was supported by her two daughters Mlle. Livia and Mlle. Jacqueline as well as by Monsieur Vincent Paravicini, who conducted the guests to their seats.

A musical programme was given by the Swiss artists, Madame Stefi Geyer, Madame Sophie Wyss and Monsieur Franz, Josef Hirt.

Madame Stefi Geyer played various pieces of Händel, Haydn, Tartini-Kreisler, Dvorak for violin. One of the player's most attractive qualities is a directness and sincerity that gave a touch of personality to all these works. Her masterful execution, and fine technique were especially admired in Händel's Sonata in F. A. Major.

Monsieur Franz Joseph Hirt's programme embraced Schumann, Brahms, Mendelssohn and Debussy and was excellently chosen. Monsieur Hirt especially excelled with a masterly rendering of the Debussy compositions by which he succeeded in bringing out all the essential elements of this composer whose music is unfortunately not yet enough appreciated.

Madame Sophie Wyss opened her programme with songs from Chausson, Cantelombe and Jacques Dalcroze. Madame Wyss intensely feels and lives her songs, and thereby penetrates right to the heart of the hearers, she possesses a soprano voice of great beauty and of an exquisite quality.

The artistes earned great applause from the company, and the Daily Papers reviewed their performance most sympathetically.

E WUNSCH.

J möcht es chlys Hüsl
Am Bärg mues es si
Wo dür Meije am Fensterli
D'Sunne schynt dri,

U d's ringsum as Gärtli
Mit emene hölzige Zun
Schöni Bluemeli drinne
Voller Beieli G'sum.

Dernäbe a Brunne
Es chlys Bächi derzue
Die gä mer Musik
U z'drinke au gnuet.

Drin im Hüsl der Friede
U gnuetsami Rueh
D's Glück chunt de entschiede
Ganz vo sälber derzue.

H. E.

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