

# Home news

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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### SWITZERLAND AND THE AUSTRIAN DEBACLE.

The Swiss Government, as well as Swiss public opinion is greatly disturbed by the Nazi seizure of Austria.

Here are a few Press comments:

*Journal de Genève.*

It is clear that in view of the upsetting of the European balance, which aggravates the international situation, Switzerland must be united. Party quarrels, differences of opinion on internal problems, give way to the necessity of affirming our independence and of showing world opinion that the Swiss people are closely unified and able to check any foreign interference.

There is happily no political group in German Switzerland comparable to that of the Austrian Nazis, but the fate of Austria cannot leave us indifferent. It moves us profoundly.

*Tribune de Genève.*

It is easy to understand that Schuschnigg was anxious to avoid the terrors of aggression, but a nation which fails to defend its independence *ipso facto* forfeits its existence. The day Switzerland is faced with such a dilemma the entire Swiss people will rise in arms to defend their country.

*Gazette de Lausanne.*

The abuse of force in international relations is a detestable thing. It imperils all the little States which can rely only on law, their existence depends on the respect for treaties and peace is imperilled when a great Power uses threats to impose its own interest.

*Vaterland.*

Up till now, only the less important clauses of the peace treaties have been violated by unilateral action. To-day, for the first time, the territorial statute of Europe, which ensures the peace of the Continent, has been modified by an act of force.

*Neue Zürcher Zeitung.*

Mit tiefster innerer Erschütterung hat das Schweizervolk die Tragödie Oesterreichs miterlebt. Was das Ende der oester. Unabhängigkeit für die Schweiz bedeutet, liegt so klar auf der Hand, dass lange Erörterungen darüber in diesem hektischen Moment der Zeitgeschichte überflüssig erscheinen. Die Schweiz. Eidgenossenschaft darf und wird nie den Schatten eines Zweifels aufkommen lassen, dass ihre Unverletzlichkeit und Unabhängigkeit auf dem Willen aller Bürger gründet, das Land seine Würde und Existenz mit Einsetzung aller Kräfte zu verteidigen.

*National Zeitung.*

Es gibt bestimmte wesentliche Dinge, über die sowohl unter uns wie im Ausland in bezug auf uns keinerlei Unklarheit mehr bestehen darf. Nur unter dieser Voraussetzung kann sich in diesen Zeiten ein kleines Staatswesen wie das unsrige behaupten: dass in unserem Volk selbst absolute Einigkeit besteht über das, was uns als Staat charakterisiert, oder anders gesagt: was die "historische Sendung" der Schweiz ist.

Viel unheilvoller als die Entwertung der Währung ist die das 20. Jahrhundert kennzeichnende Abwertung des Völkerrechts, die "Entheiligung" aller Verträge. Die Wiederstandskraft eines Staates beruht nur noch auf der Einheitlichkeit des Willens des ganzen Volkes bei voller demokratischer Freiheit.

*St. Galler Tagblatt.*

Von gewaltiger wehrpolitischer Tragweite ist die totale Einverleibung Oesterreichs ins

Dritte Reich für die Schweiz, worüber es sich eigentlich erübrigt, Worte zu verlieren. Vom Montblanc bzw. der südwestlichen Spitze des Wallis über den Tessin, Graubünden an den Bodensee und von da nach Basel, das heisst auf drei Vierteln der schweizerischen Grenzen stehen wir nun der verbündeten italienisch-deutschen Wehrmacht gegenüber. Die quasi neutrale Grenze, welche wir im Osten gegen Oesterreich hin hatten, ist verschwunden. Gewaltigste Anstrengung zur Selbstbehauptung wird die unausbleibliche Folge sein.

#### GERMAN MINISTER CALLS ON M. MOTTA.

Dr. Koecher, the German Minister in Berne, has paid a visit to M. Motta, head of the Political Dept. in Berne. He has officially informed him that the Austrian Legation has been taken over by the German Legation; at the same time, Dr. Koecher has informed M. Motta that Germany will respect Swiss Neutrality.

#### TRANSFER OF SWISS MINISTER TO AUSTRIA.

Dr. Maximilian Jaeger, Swiss Minister in Vienna and Budapest, is shortly leaving Vienna for Budapest.

#### SWISS STRENGTHEN FRONTIER GUARD.

Swiss troops have arrived along the Austro-Swiss border to reinforce the frontier guards, all of whom are on duty, and police armed with steel helmets and rifles have been sent up to perform special duties.

#### APPOINTMENTS OF SWISS MILITARY ATTACHE'S.

The Federal Council has announced the following appointments for the posts of military attaché's:

*Rome:* Colonel Charles de Wattenwyl, from Berne, born in 1884, until recently "Kreis-Instruktor" of the 3rd division. Colonel de Wattenwyl has been principally connected with the 2nd and 3rd division. For a considerable time he was a member of the Swiss General Staff and he was repeatedly sent on military missions to France, England and Germany. (Colonel de Wattenwyl is a brother of Madame Paravicini, wife of the Swiss Minister in London).

*Paris:* Major Richard de Blonay, born in 1898, he is a cavalry officer, a member of the General Staff and until recently on the staff of the first division.

*Berlin:* Colonel Hans von Werdt, born in 1884, until recently instructor of the 5th division. Colonel von Werdt held at one time the command of the mountain infantry regiment 29.

#### PROFESSOR KARL BARTH HONOURED.

The University of Oxford has conferred the degree of *doctor honoris causa* on Dr. Karl Barth, Professor of Theology, at the University in Basle.

#### TRADE OF SWITZERLAND.

Swiss foreign trade made decided progress in 1937. The improvement is particularly striking in regard to exports, which were helped by the devaluation of the currency from 154f. to the pound to over 21f. and the general improvement on the world market. The returns of the Statistical Office show that imports reached a value of 1,807,000,000f., compared with 1,266,000,000f. in 1936, while exports totalled 1,286,000,000f., against 882,000,000f. the previous year.

The outstanding feature was the recovery of the watchmaking industry, the situation of which looked hopeless five years ago. That industry occupies 11 per cent. of all the workmen engaged in manufacturers. Ninety-five per cent. of the watches produced in Switzerland are exported.

Imports from Great Britain were £5,216,307 while exports to her reached £6,656,607. Purchases of Swiss goods by the British Empire as a whole totalled £10,200,000, or about one-sixth of Swiss exports, while British Empire sales to Switzerland reached £8,900,000, or nearly one-tenth of Swiss imports.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

Dr. Otto Nägeli, Professor of medicine at the University of Zurich, has died in Samaden at the age of 67. The deceased was a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Heidelberg.

#### BERNE.

From Berne comes the news of the death of M. Pietro Vela, Editor-in-chief of the "Schweizerischen Depeschengentur für den Dienst in italienischer Sprache" at the age of 42. M. Vela had been since 1916 connected with this institution.

### LUCERNE.

Madame Kapp, née Hänni in Uzwil, has celebrated her 100th birthday anniversary.

### SCHWYZ.

An attack was made by a man, on the cashier of the branch of the Cantonal Bank in Brunnen, the assailant was later on arrested, M. Weigert, the cashier, was only slightly injured.

### GLARUS.

M. Edwin Hauser, States Councillor, has resigned his seat as representative of the canton of Glarus in the 1st Chamber (Ständerat).

M. Hauser, who is 75 years old, resigned in 1932 from the cantonal government of which he was a member for 30 years. From 1926-1932 he occupied the post of "Landammann." He entered Parliament in 1921 and in 1936 presided over the States Council.

M. Hauser, has during his long political career rendered great services not only to his native canton, but to the whole Swiss Confederation.

### FRIBOURG.

The elections for the "Conseil général" of the town of Fribourg have shown the following result: Conservatives 50; Radicals 18 (14); Socialists 12 (16).

### AARGAU.

The death has occurred in Aarau of Lieutenant-Colonel Heinrich Habicht, at the age of 79.

The deceased studied law at the Universities of Heidelberg, Jena, Munich, Berlin and Montpellier. In 1895 he entered the Federal Instruction Corps, where for many years he rendered great services to our army. During the war he wrote many of the articles dealing with military matters, which were published in the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung."

### THURGAU.

The members of the cantonal government, Messrs. Paul Altweg, R. Freymuth, Dr. J. Müller, A. Schmid (all radicals) and Dr. W. Staehlin (Conservative) have been re-elected.

### TICINO.

The government of the canton of Ticino has started an action for fraud against the firm Bianchi and Pagani in Lugano, in connection with work executed on the Gandria Road. It is reported that the firm (road contractors) has used inferior material for constructional purposes, whilst charging top prices. The sum in question is between 40 and 60,000 frs.

### VAUD.

A Swiss business man, M. Sépibus, from Lausanne, who arrived in Marseilles some days ago, met a number of men and a young woman known in certain dancing resorts frequented by Britons and Americans as "Dolly Dimple."

It was explained to M. Sépibus that highly-placed French politicians, fearing a new slump of the franc, were anxious to play for safety by changing their liquid funds into Swiss currency, but naturally had to avoid running up against the strict control exercised at the frontiers.

M. Sépibus was given to understand that if he could produce Swiss money valued at 90,000 S.Frs. in English currency, he would receive twice that sum in French francs at present valuation.

At first he hesitated, but when he had visited a cabaret and made the acquaintance of the charming "Dolly Dimple," he agreed to the deal.

No sooner had he arrived with the Swiss francs than the party were accosted by three men, one of whom displayed a badge of the French Sûreté Nationale and insisted on seizing all the money in the possession of the parties on the ground that they were breaking the law about currency transactions.

The supposed inspector handed the whole of the notes to the girl while they were passing outside to find taxis to take them to the police depot. M. Sépibus was ultimately left with two supposed police officers, who found an excuse for leaving him in a remote part of the town.

The police are certain now that the whole affair was the work of a gang captained by a Corsican named Jacques Ulysse, who seems to have played the rôle of the false police chief.

Five members of the gang have been arrested in Marseilles or Paris, but the booty has not been found, nor has "Dolly Dimple."