

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur Charles Humbert, at present Chargé d'Affaires in Chile, to the post of Swiss Minister in Czecho-Slovakia, in succession to Minister Hohl who has been recently transferred to Japan.

The newly appointed Minister was born in Berne in 1901 and is a citizen of Le Locle and Berne. He studied law at the Universities of Heidelberg, Vienna and Berne.

Dr. Charles Humbert entered the Diplomatic Service in 1928, and acted previously as Consular Attaché at Milan, La Paz, Caracas (Santiago de Chile, Buenos Aires, Leipzig and Paris. In 1943, he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation, and three years later (1946) was transferred to Chile as Chargé d'Affaires.

Dr. Jean Decroux has been nominated Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Republic of Hungary, in succession to Minister Grässli who has been transferred to India.

Minister Decroux was born in 1903 in Bussigny sur Morges, and is a citizen of Bulle. He entered the Diplomatic Service in 1927, and held successive Consular appointments in Mannheim, Riga, Nantes and Oslo. In 1940, he was promoted to the rank of Secretary of Legation and three years later (1943) whilst at Vichy, to the rank of Counsellor of Legation. He returned to Berne in 1944, and the following year acted as Chargé d'Affaires in Oslo. Recently, he held an important post at the Foreign Office in Berne.

The Indian Government has raised their Berne Legation to the rank of Embassy. Minister Yezdesard Dinshaw Gundevia has presented his credentials as Ambassador to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

The Federal Council has delegated Federal-Councillor Escher, Head of the Post and Railway

Department, to the Conference of Ministers of Transport which will take place at Brussels next month.

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 18.44 million passengers during the month of July 1953, or 265,000 more than in July 1952. Receipts: 35.86 million francs. (July, 1952: 35.32 million francs.)

Goods traffic increased by 10,000 tons and is returned as 1.75 million tons carried. Receipts: 33.95 million francs. (July, 1952: 33.18 million francs.)

Customs duties collected during the month of August 1953 amounted to 54.8 million francs, or 4.4 million francs more than in August, 1952.

During the first eight months of the current year the receipts amounted to 302.1 million francs which exceeds last year's figures for the same period by 13.6 million francs.

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**Cantonal**

Mr. Max Felchlin, Industrialist of Schwyz, and President of the "Gemeinützigen Gesellschaft" of the canton of Schwyz, has, on the occasion of his 70th birthday anniversary made a donation of 50,000.—francs to the above mentioned institution. [A.T.S.]

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The traditional "Knabenschiessen" at the Albisgütli near Zurich took place on the 12th of this month, and was attended by 5,867 young riflemen. Amongst the visitors who attended the competition was General Henri Guisan, a deputation from the municipal authorities of Zurich and the British Consul-General, Mr. Mariott.

Walter Germann of Zurich (aged 16) was proclaimed "Schützenkönig" with 35 points. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. Auguste Bouvier has been appointed Director of the Library of the University of Geneva, in succession to Mr. Henri Delarue, who has vacated his post on reaching retiring age. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The Lord Mayor of London and Lady De la Bère arrived at Cointrin aerodrome on an official visit to Geneva. They were greeted by the civic authorities, who accompanied the party to the Hotel Beau Rivage, where the Lord Mayor has rooms that were once occupied by the late Empress Elizabeth of Austria. After being received at the town hall Sir Rupert De la Bère visited an exhibition of watches and enamels, and later on was the guest of the Geneva Government at a dinner. [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. Hans Eduard Fierz, for many years Professor of Chemistry at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, in Zurich at the age of 72.

Remo Patocchi, a well-known painter of mountain landscapes, in Faido, aged 77.

Othmar Egger, a former judge of the Superior Court of Obwalden, and for many years a member of the "Kantonsrat" of Obwalden, in Kriens, at the age of 74.

Charles Besuchet an expert on "Obstbaumkunde", and "Chevalier du mérite agricole de France", in Agioz, aged 79.

Willy Stocker, author of novels and historical works. Amongst the best-known of his books are the biography of the Schaffhauser historian Johannes von Müller, and the novel "Die Gauchenzilg". He died in Zurich, at the age of 61.

Jules Peney, for 30 years in the service of the municipal administration of Geneva. The deceased was seven times Mayor of the town of Geneva, and from 1918-1931, Mayor of Eaux-Vives.

Jean Dätwyler, since 1933 a member of the rural council of Lausanne, over which he presided in 1951, in Lausanne aged 51.

Dr. Paul Allemann, President of the Superior Court of the canton of Solothurn, in Solothurn, at the age of 63. The deceased was for several years a member of the "Kantonsrat".

Joseph Pasquier, from 1935-1951 a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Geneva, and for ten

years General Secretary of the Independent Christian Socialist Party of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 63.

Hermann Schlatter, a former member of the Superior Court of Schaffhausen and the "Kantonsrat". He was for several years Editor of the "Echos vom Rheinfall" and the "Genossenschaftlichen Volksblattes". He died in Stein a Rh. at the age of 80.

Arthur Riedel, landscape and animal painter, and a former pupil of Hans Thoma, in Basle, aged 65.

Theodor Gut, former National-Councillor, and for 35 years a member of the editorial staff of the "Zürichsee Zeitung". He sat in Parliament (National Council) from 1935-1946.

Dr. Oscar Lehmann, lawyer, in St. Gall, at the age of 82. The deceased was from 1906-1921 a member of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall.

Dr. J. Baumann, a member of the Federal-Council from 1934-1940, in Herisau, aged 79. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The undermentioned anniversaries are announced in the Swiss Press:

Dr. h.c. Walter Amstalden, Sarnen (70). He was for 20 years Public Prosecutor of the canton of Obwalden; for 14 years a member of the cantonal government, and from 1925-1943 a member of the States Council over which he presided in 1935/36.

Mgr. François Charrière (60) Fribourg, Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg. He was born in Cerniat (Greyerz District) and studied in Fribourg and Rome. Dr. Charrière started his priesthood in Lausanne, and afterwards became Professor of canon law at the University of Fribourg. In 1940, he was appointed Editor of the paper "Liberté"; five years later (1945) he was elected Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg in succession to Mgr. Besson.

[A.T.S.]

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The following couples have celebrated their diamond-wedding anniversary (65) in Switzerland: Mr. & Mrs. W. Ilg-Ilg of Salenstein (Ct. Thurgau); Prof. Dr. med & Mrs. Blum of Zurich; Mr. & Mrs. E. Desalmand-Speckert of Bienne; Mr. & Mrs. H. Lutz-Schlöpfer of Heiden; Mr. & Mrs. U. Frei-Naef of Degersheim, (Ct. St. Gall).

Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Zweifel-Schiesser of Linthal have celebrated the "steinernen" wedding anniversary. (70). The husband is 94 years of age and his wife 91. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Switzerland trebled the Customs duty on imports of stockings made from synthetic fibre such as nylon to Frs.2,400 per 100 kilograms gross (about 220 pounds weight).

\* \* \*

The Swiss Foundation of Alpine Climbers has applied to the Nepal Government for permission for an expedition to climb Mount Everest in 1954. Official sources said that the Swiss application, received two weeks ago, was now under consideration, but the spring of 1954 had already been allotted to the French. The Swiss could make climbs both before and after the monsoon, if the French team did not arrive.

\* \* \*

In the course of a visit to Zurich, Mr. B. C. Roy, Prime Minister of Bengal, has met representatives of the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research to study the question of the creation of a Climbing Institute in Darjeeling. Sherpa Tensing, one of the conquerors of

Everest, took part in the discussions. The Foundation has decided to send Arnold Glatthard, head of the Swiss Climbing School at Rosenlauri in the Bernese Oberland to Dajeerling to examine the land and choose Indian and Nepalese personnel who can be later trained in Switzerland. The Indian Authorities have asked the Swiss to supervise all the work in connection with the project.

\* \* \*

A total of 316 competitors have asked to take part in this year's "International Contest for Musical Performers", which will be held from September 21st to October 4th. They are from 33 different countries and consist of 162 men and 154 women. Britain is sending 12 competitors. Other countries taking part are: France 73, Italy 36, Germany 34, Switzerland 33, Austria 27, U.S.A. 24, Belgium 17, Yugoslavia 7, Argentine and Denmark 5 each, Australia, Finland and Spain 4, Canada and Greece 3, Brazil, Mexico, Holland and Uruguay 2. Other competitors are from South Africa, Chile, China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Persia, Sweden, Turkey and the Ukraine. Four others are stateless. The largest number of competitors — 109 — have entered for singing, with 106 for piano, 39 for cello, 24 for clarinet and 14 for bassoon. There are also six quartets.

The final concert of the prizewinners, accompanied by the Orchestra de la Suisse Romande, will be held on Sunday evening, October 4th. It will be broadcast by the Swiss radio and several foreign transmitters. The theatres of Basel, Mulhouse and Colmar will also invite the winners for personal appearances.

\* \* \*

According to last year's survey, out of 49 Swiss glaciers, only one — the Scex Rouge glacier in the Vaud Alps — is advancing. Apart from the stationary Rhone glacier, all the others are slowly moving backwards. The reason: last summer's extreme heat.

\* \* \*

The committee organising the horse-races on snow in St. Moritz announces that the next meetings will be held between January 31st and February 7th. They also state that the prize-money will be increased.

\* \* \*

An Albert Schweitzer College has been opened at Churwalden in the Grisons with the aim of developing international understanding through the medium of religion, as taught by the great educator whose name it bears. Most of the students are from America.

\* \* \*

The Swiss film "Heidi", based on the novel by Johanna Spyri has been awarded a first prize at the Educational Film Festival in Venice.

\* \* \*

To mark the 150th anniversary of the entry of the canton of St. Gall into the Swiss Confederation, the Association of Artisans has renovated a "State Cellar" under an old tower behind the government offices and handed it over to representatives of the cantonal government.

\* \* \*

The official record for climbing the Matterhorn has been beaten by 20 minutes. The feat, carried out by

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guide Alphonse Lauber of Taesch, accompanied by 15-year-old Hermann Biner of Zermatt, took three hours from the Hörnli hut to the peak. The climb was timed by other guides.

\* \* \*

The European office of the United Nations in Geneva announces the setting-up there of an International Building Council under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. The new body, which is non-governmental, will be mainly concerned with experimental and practical research and documentary work.

\* \* \*

Pilot Hans Nietlispach, a gliding instructor, has reached an altitude of 28,208 ft. over the Jura mountains. He was piloting a Meise III/88 glider. Although he was equipped with an oxygen mask, the extreme cold prevented him from going any higher.

\* \* \*

The monastery of Hauterive, near the Swiss city of Fribourg, has celebrated the eighth centenary of the death of the founder of the Cistercian Order. The building was founded in 1138 and was occupied by members of the Order until 1848 when certain Swiss cantons drew up the Sonderbund, a defensive pact dealing with religious as well as other matters. Afterwards it was used for teaching students and not handed back to the monks until 1939. Among its fine architecture and sculpture are stalls in the style of the Bourgogne school of the 15th century.

\* \* \*

This year it is the turn of Geneva to organise the International Horse Show. This well-known event will be held in November, and riders from many countries will be taking part. In addition, Zurich is holding a national training and jumping competition on September 12th and 13th, open to both men and women riders, which will take place on the left bank of the river Limmat near Schlieren.

\* \* \*

Well-known in the world of letters is the Veillon Prize, a 5,000 franc award which Mr. Charles Veillon of Lausanne gives every year in a competition open to French-speaking authors. Now he is offering an additional 5,000 francs, open to writers of all countries, for the best novel written in German.

Besides this, the Welti Foundation is offering 3,000 francs to the author of the best play written in one of Switzerland's four national languages between January 1st, 1951, and November 30th, 1953. Radio Basel is to award a thousand francs to the writer of the best epic poem. To celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the death of Jeremias Gotthelf, the cantonal government of Berne is holding a competition for dramatised versions taken from the Bernese writer's work. And finally, a Berlin publisher announces a competition, open to German-speaking Swiss, for the best novel appearing this year — with a prize of 5,000 German marks.

\* \* \*

A ninth edition is now being printed of Professor Hans Huber's important book "How Switzerland is Governed". Professor Huber, who is from Berne, is a former judge of the Federal Tribunal.

In the Arts Festival of Sao Paulo in Brazil, held every two years, Swiss art has been presented by the great Bernese painter Ferdinand Hodler.

\* \* \*

Latest exhibit to be added to the Richard Wagner museum at Tribschen, on the Lake of Lucerne, is a valuable original manuscript of the first edition of "The Flying Dutchman". The gift was handed over by the writer Hans Reinhart of Winterthur.

#### PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

*"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).*

Lors du rallye de Monaco de cette année, à l'épreuve de régularité des motocyclettes, une marque suisse d'ancienne renommée a remporté les 1er, 2e et 15e prix du classement général, gagnant pour la troisième fois le challenge de la marque la mieux classée et, grâce à ce succès, la coupe du Prince de Monaco.

\* \* \*

Le gouvernement turc vient d'acheter 800 machines à écrire d'une maison suisse mondialement connue, ce qui est un succès remarquable pour l'industrie mécanique de notre pays.

\* \* \*

Un ingénieur suisse a, sur demande d'une maison lausannoise, développé le "Cinéma Perfectone", nouveau système de films en relief à trois dimensions. Les résultats des projections d'essai ont été à tel point convaincants que la Twentieth Century Fox a décidé de faire des essais en Amérique.

\* \* \*

Arnold Glatthard, chef de l'école suisse de guides de montagne de Rosenlauri et chef de l'entraînement de l'association suisse de ski, a l'honneur d'avoir été appelé à organiser les travaux préparatoires pour la fondation d'un Institut pour guides à Darjeeling (Indes).

\* \* \*

Lors d'une exposition internationale d'art floral à Hambourg, la Suisse a reçu le prix d'honneur de la ville hanséatique pour la plus belle exposition.

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