

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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### NEWS AT RANDOM

#### Federal

Monsieur Max Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation, has sent a telegram to President Eisenhower wishing him a speedy recovery.

Monsieur Jorge Gascia Tunon, the newly appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Cuba, has presented his credentials to Monsieur M. Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

Minister Egbert von Graffenried, Head of the Swiss Delegation of the Neutral International Commission for the exchange of prisoners of war in Korea, has arrived in Panmunjon to take up his post.

The Federal Council has appointed Colonel Maurice Juillard (b. 1901) of St. Maurice to the post of "Oberkriegskommissär", in succession to Colonel Rütishauser, with promotion to the rank of Brigade-Colonel. Colonel Juillard has been attached since 1926 to the Instructors Corps, and until recently was "Waffenplatzkommandant" of Thun.

Dr. Kurt Locher (Oberegg) has been appointed Vice-Director of the Federal Tax Administration (Eidg. Steuerverwaltung), he has been in the service of this administration since 1944.

Dr. Oskar Friedli (Ochlenberg) has also been nominated to the post of Vice-Director of the same administration in which he has served since 1918.

The Federal Council has decided to take up a loan of 230 million francs at three per cent repayable within 12 years.

Customs receipts for the month of August, 1955, amounted to 66.7 million francs, or 7.2 million francs more than in August, 1954.

The receipts for the first eight months of the current year total 381.4 million francs or 46.8 million francs more than during the same period in 1954.

The Federal Council has promoted Mr. Charles Kilchenmann to the rank of Consul, with appointment to Winnipeg (Canada).

Mr. Kilchenmann was born in Berne, and hails from Ersigen (Ct. Berne). He entered into the service of the Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office) in 1927, and successively occupied posts in Milan, Besançon, London, Lyons, Brussels, New York and St. Louis.

Mr. Max Fischer of Hefenhofen (Ct. Thurgau), born in 1914, has been nominated Honorary Vice-Consul in Osorno (Chile).

Mr. Guillaume Hürry has been promoted to the rank of Vice-Consul, he will be in charge of the Swiss Consulate in Oporto. He was born in 1911, and hails from Gurbrü and Chézard-St.-Martin (Ct. Berne). Mr. Hürry entered into the service of the Confederation in 1929, and subsequently occupied posts in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Venice and Lisbon.

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 17.76 million passengers in August, 1955, or 1.07 million more than in August, 1954. Receipts: 33.26 million francs (August, 1954: 31.27 million francs).

Goods traffic is returned as 1.94 million tons, which exceeds last years August figures by 120,000 tons. Receipts: 38.38 million francs (August, 1954: 35.89 million francs).

### Nouvelle Société Helvétique and Anglo-Swiss Society

#### OPEN MEETING

Tuesday, October 18th, 1955, at 7 p.m.

Monsieur ARMIN DAENIKER  
Swiss Minister

will speak in English on:

"SWISS EXPERIENCE IN ACTIVE NEUTRALITY"  
as chief of the Swiss Delegation to the Neutral Nation  
Commission for the repatriation of Prisoners of War  
in Korea. (Films will be shown.)

At Londonderry House, Park Lane, W.1.  
nr. Curzon Street, Bus stop.

All Swiss and friends are welcome.

**Cantonal**

Lord Hailsham gave a lecture at the University of Zurich on "Relations between Religion and Politics". He was afterwards the guest of the British-Swiss Society at a dinner at the "Kongresshaus". Monsieur A. Daeniker, Swiss Minister in London, was amongst the guests. [A.T.S.]

The "American Society of Mechanical Engineers", has elected Professor, Dr. J. Ackert of the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, as an honorary member. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Fred Birmann has been nominated Press Chief of the "Schweizerischen Zentrale für Verkehrsförderung", Zurich. He was formerly Head of the section for Press and Public Relations at the agency in New York. [A.T.S.]

The Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich will hold its centenary celebration during October 17th — 23rd, 1955. A programme of lectures and excursions, primarily intended for the old students' association will be held during October 17th — 20th. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Werner Allgöwer (Socialist) Lucerne is not contesting his seat at the forthcoming Parliamentary elections. [A.T.S.]

Dr. ing. chem. Stanislas-Emile Nicolet (b. 1909) has been appointed Vice-Director of SUVA (Schweiz. Unfallversicherungs Anstalt) Lucerne. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Hans Ott (Liberal) has been elected President of the 2nd Tribunal of Thun with 3,335 votes, his opponent, Dr. Aldo Zaugg (Socialist) received 3,250 votes. [A.T.S.]

From January 1st, to August 31st, 1955. 475 traffic accidents have been reported in the canton of Fribourg. 238 persons were injured of whom 21 succumbed to their injuries. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Georges Carrel, clerk of the Glâne District Court (Fribourg) has been elected President of the Court. [A.T.S.]

The population, at the end of August, 1955, of the canton of Basle-Town numbered 210,309. [A.T.S.]

The French Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Dennery, has paid a courtesy visit to the Government

of the canton of Ticino. After a reception at the Government house in Bellinzona the distinguished visitor was conducted to Sambucco where the new Maggia building site was visited. [A.T.S.]

National Councillor Rodolfo Bordoni (Lugano) will not contest his seat at the next Parliamentary election. He belongs to the Conservative Party. [A.T.S.]

The British ambassador, Sir Lionel Lamb, has paid an official visit to the Government of the canton of Ticino, in Bellinzona. [A.T.S.]

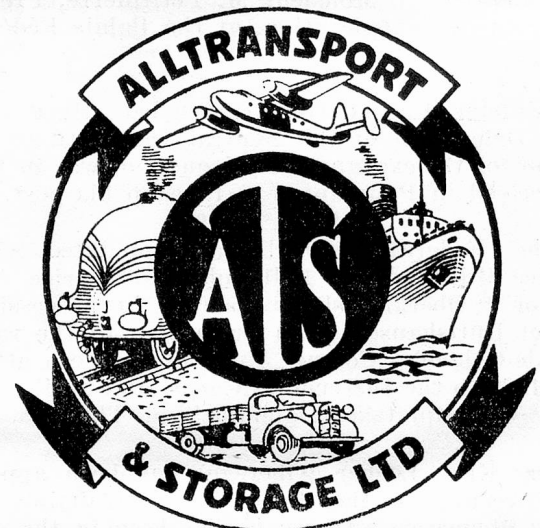
The 36th "Comptoir Suisse" in Lausanne was visited by more than 800,000 persons. [A.T.S.]

The Neuchâtel "Fête des Vignerons" took place on the 1st and 2nd of this month. [A.T.S.]

**DEATHS.**

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. Alfred Hofstetter, in Gais (Ct. Appenzell a.Rh.), at the age of 87. The deceased studied law at the Universities of Zurich, Berlin, Lausanne and Berne. In 1894, he established himself as a lawyer in Gais. For six years, he officiated as "Gemeindehauptmann" of Gais. From 1900-1910, and from 1921-1934, he sat in the "Kantonsrat". In 1910, he was elected a member of the cantonal Government, which post he held until 1919. Dr. Hofstetter was a Member of Parliament (National Council) from 1921-1931.

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Edouard Wasserfallen, from 1905-1933, Director of the Primary schools of La Chaux-de-Fonds, in Chambrelieu (Ct. Neuchâtel), aged 91.

Hans Dubach-Kopp, for 39 years a teacher at the secondary school and the municipal teachers seminary, Lucerne. The deceased was also rector of the "Kaufmännischen Berufsschule", Lucerne, in Lucerne at the age of 75.

Albert Muret, painter and author, in Pully, aged 81.

Paul Bratschi, for 34 years teacher of Music at the "Collège de Genève", and for more than 50 years a Professor at the Conservatoire of Geneva, in Geneva at the age of 80.

Colonel Peter Sarasin-Alioth, silk ribbon industrialist; during the first world war he served on the General Staff, holding the post of Chief of Staff of the 4th Division, in Basle aged 86.

Professor, Dr. Heinrich Temperli, from 1921-1946, Professor at the commercial university, St. Gall, in St. Gall, at the age of 70.

Dr. Ernst Wyss, Director of the tax administration of the Federal Finance and Customs Office, in Berne, aged 62.

Adolf Schäfer, for many years President of the "Internationalen Graphischen Föderation", and for 18 years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Berne, in Berne, at the age of 73.

Professor Albert Ginnel, a teacher at the regional secondary school in Neuchâtel, aged 61.

Adolf Mühlemann, architect, and from 1933-1950 President of the commune of Interlaken, and a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Berne, in Interlaken, at the age of 76. [A.T.S.]

#### ANNIVERSARIES.

Dr. Emil Landolt (60) of Zurich, Mayor (Stadtpräsident) of the town of Zurich. Dr. Landolt entered into the service of the cantonal "Finanz-direction" in 1925. Eight years later (1933) he was appointed Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Zurich. In 1942, Dr. Landolt was elected a member of the Municipal Council, and in 1949, he was chosen as Mayor in succession to Dr. Lüchinger.

Hans Thomi-Tresch (70) of Basle, industrialist, and well-known mountaineer.

Otto Maag (70) of Basle, well-known music critic, and a member of the editorial staff of the "Nationalzeitung", Basle. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Eugster-Graf, and Mr. and Mrs. R. Zellweger-Höhener, of Rehtobel (Ct. Appenzell

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a.Rh.), Dr. E. and Mrs. S. Laur, of Brugg (Dr. Laur was formerly "Schweiz. Bauernsekretär"), he is 85 of age, and his wife 81. [A.T.S.]

Switzerland had an ocean-going merchant fleet of 31 ships, totalling 165,000 tons, at the end of last year, according to the annual report of the Swiss Political Department. During the year, four vessels aggregating 33,600 tons, were sold.

Of the 702 seaman in Swiss vessels, 287 were Swiss, or 40 per cent, compared with only 7 per cent in 1947. The increase is primarily due to the development and improvement in the training facilities for Swiss seaman. There is still a shortage of trained officers.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Air Guard and Swiss Air Office have organized a practice rescue, which took place on the Zanfleuron glacier, on the Diablerets mountain, where an airliner was assumed to have crashed at a height of 9,000 ft.

Three aircraft dropped rescue equipment, medical supplies, foodstuffs, and five parachutists, who had been trained in Britain two years ago, at the appointed place three-quarters of an hour after the supposed accident. The parachutists were joined by half a dozen Alpine guides, who had to walk for four and a half hours to reach the place. The rescuers spent the night in a tent on the glacier, and the next day the aircraft of the air guard came to collect the men and the equipment and transported them to the nearest air landing ground.

\* \* \*

*Agricultural Exhibition Olma St. Gall, 13th-23rd October.*

This annual Exhibition will have a large show of brown cattle as a special feature this year. Apart from the principal sections of the Fair (Agriculture and Milk industries) fruit and vegetables produced in Eastern Switzerland by various nursery methods will be on show.

*8th International Coach Rally, Montreux 16th-19th May, 1956.*

The Organisers contemplate the following Events :  
(a) Touristic Test (open to all coaches), based on performance during the journey to Montreux, the reliability contest and the technical test.

(b) "Grand Prix de Montreux" (new coaches only),

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classification in accordance with results of the technical test and the "Concours d'élégance".

Application forms will be obtainable from December, 1955, onwards from the Official Enquiry Office, Montreux, Switzerland.

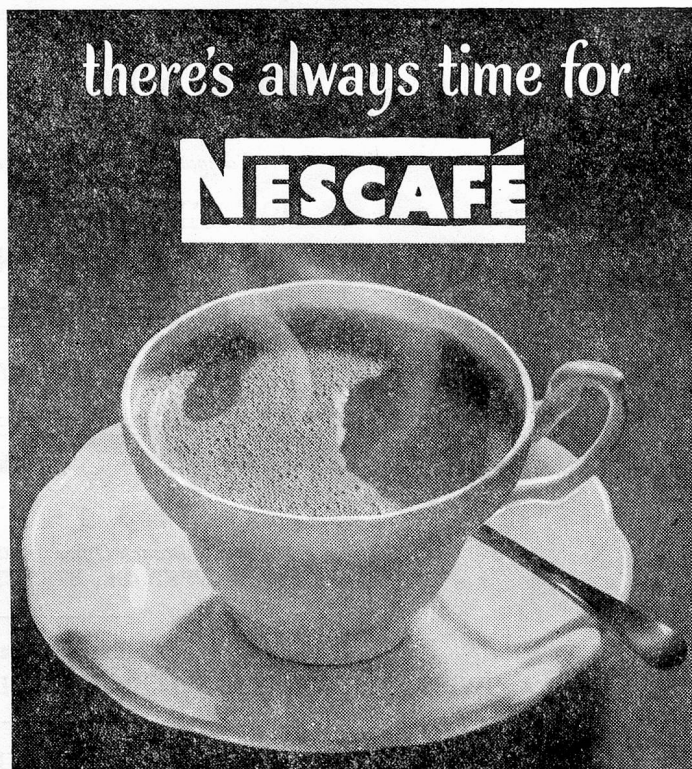
*European Railways drop three class system.*

On June 3rd, 1956, the present first-class accommodation will be withdrawn by the principal European Railway Administrations.

As far as Switzerland is concerned, it is anticipated that the present 2nd and 3rd class fares will be the future 1st and 2nd class fares respectively. Apart from the withdrawal of the yellow first class tickets and the cancellation of the fares in the respective tariffs, no further changes in the fare structure are contemplated.

*Yodelling.*

Genuine yodelling, as heard in the mountains of Switzerland, has very little in common with the yodelling songs sung by some of the popular singers of today or "hotted up" by certain jazz bands. In its most recent number "Costumes and Customs", the periodical put out by the National Federation of Swiss Costumes, gives some very interesting information concerning the origin of this custom: "Old texts, the Acta sanctorum, mention the song of the shepherds as long ago as 397. Julian the Apostate, Emperor of Rome from 361 to 363, alludes in his Misopogon to the songs of the Barbarians living along the banks of the Rhine as being "high-pitched like those of birds". We have it from reliable sources that at



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ANOTHER OF NESTLÉ'S GOOD THINGS



the end of the Middle Ages there were hundreds of different yodels in the various different parts of Switzerland. They enabled the uncommunicative mountaineers to give vent to their feelings; the song was a form of release.

Although originating in lonely places, it was soon heard at public gatherings, at village and mountain feasts, fairs and wrestling matches or in the celebrated "bénichons" (traditional autumn festivals held in the Canton of Fribourg). Then it was sung in unison, the leader intoning the melody, which was taken up by the chorus. The theme, thus learnt in common, was then taken back to the chalets, the workshops, the cow-sheds and the fields. Paul Budry, author of "La Suisse qui chante", added that "yodellers in music halls usually give quite a wrong idea of how it should be done, sweetening and sentimentalizing it, whereas in actual fact the yodel is virile, sharp, caustic and aggressive like the temperaments high up in the mountains, where love is a challenge, where friendships are forged in a wrestling match fought stripped to the waist on the grass and the joy of living is expressed in uproarious drinking matches. There are different types of yodelling, ranging from what might be called the "hot yodel", a form of pure improvisation and vocal acrobatics, to the yodelled song for four voices. Löbe, Leckler Chüedreckler, Rugguusser each have their own rules and liberties. There is the competition yodel sung in turn by a group of people round a table, the group yodel, the thaler yodel that has to be held as long



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as a coin spins on a plate, the danced yodel and the "ranz des vaches", a Swiss cowherd's melody interspersed with calls and shouts that the cows seem to understand very well.

*How does a Swiss household spend its money?*

Since 1943, the Federal Office for Industry, the Arts and Crafts and Labour (OFIAMT) has been closely following the changes taking place in family budgets. Bread plays a progressively smaller part in the budget of the average Swiss household. Milk and milk products represent almost a quarter of all expenditure on food. Fruit accounts for a fifth, and meat and fish for another fifth.

Today workers' families spend less on drink and tobacco than before the war (a drop from 3.6% to 2.7%). In the families of office workers, the same tendency is noted although it is not so marked. The manual worker's family on the other hand spends more on clothing, devoting 9.5% of its total expenditure, instead of 9% just before the war. With office workers the figure is also 9.5%.

The biggest change seems to have taken place in the field of rents, with regard to both manual and office workers. Before the war, rents accounted for more than 17% of total expenditure in both categories of Swiss wage-earners. Now it amounts to only 12.6% for the manual worker and 13.1% for the office worker. The reduction in the proportion spent on rent has made it possible to increase other items of expenditure. Both office and manual workers have spent more money on furnishing their homes, looking after their health, on education, entertainment, transport, travel and insurance.

Very great changes have occurred too in the field of insurance, entertainment and transport. Nowadays, office workers set aside 11.7% of their expenditure for insurances, and manual workers 11.3%. Before the war, neither of these figures came to more than 10%. In both classes of wage-earners again, transport and travel account for 3.2% of the family budget. Previously, they did not even amount to as much as 2% for the manual workers. It is significant that both manual and office workers take advantage of the improved conditions to give themselves better protection against the hazards of life.

*Swiss Tourism during the first half of 1955.*

From January to June, 1955, the number of overnight reservations made by tourists from abroad amounted to 4,816,184, an increase of 235,446 (5.14%)

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over the same period last year. For Swiss tourists, the total number of overnight reservations for this first half of the year amounted to 9,864,403 (+ 3.92%). British visitors spent 918,000 and French visitors 731,000 nights in Switzerland. The figures for North American visitors increased considerably: 417,000 (+ 9.60%) as well as those for Dutch nationals: 301,000 (+ 10.07%).

#### *A Century of Swiss Railways.*

In 1947 the Federal Transport Office in Berne, in collaboration with Swiss Federal Railways and numerous experts, began the task of producing a comprehensive commemorative work on the evolution of Swiss Railways during the first hundred years of their existence, entitled "A Century of Swiss Railways (1847-1947)" (Vol. 4 — published by Delachaux and Niestlé)\*. The first volume was devoted to a general introduction and the history, finances, statistics and personnel of the Swiss Railways. The second volume dealt with permanent ways and fixed installations for normal and narrow-gauge tracks. Rolling stock formed the subject of the third volume. The fourth volume, which has just come out, deals with Administration, organisation and traffic. The directors of publication, Maurice Paschoud and René Thiessing, have taken the evolution of railways during the last few years into account and the work has been brought up to date as far as 1954. Numerous illustrations add to the interest of this work which is a veritable compendium of Swiss railway lore.

\*Neuchâtel and Paris.

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There will be various stalls, clothing, stationery, foods, etc., games, etc., and an interesting entertainment for young and old. Light refreshments will be available.

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