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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has decided to be represented in South Africa by a Minister instead as hitherto by a Chargé d'Affaires, with residence in Pretoria.

Monsieur Jean de Rham, at present Chargé d'Affaires in South Africa, has been promoted to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary.

Minister de Rham was born in 1907 at Geneva, and is a citizen of Giez (Ct. Vaud). After having studied *juris prudencia* at the Universities of Lausanne and Munich he entered the Diplomatic Service in 1934, and was sent to London in 1937, where he remained until 1946, in which year he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation. From 1946-1947, he held the post of Consul General in Hamburg, and afterwards was transferred to the Foreign Office in Berne. In 1950, he went to Rome as 1st Counsellor of Legation, and in December, 1951, he represented the Confederation at Pretoria in the capacity of Chargé d'Affaires. (M. de Rham was well-known to the Swiss Colony during his nine years *séjour* in London.)

* * *

Minister Dr. Karl Stucki has been appointed chief of the Swiss delegation of the Neutral International Commission for the exchange of prisoners of war in Korea.

* * *

Communist China has rejected a proposal by the Swiss Government to disband the four power neutral armistice commission in Korea, but has approved an alternative Swiss proposal to reduce the number of the commission.

* * *

Customs duties for the month of January, 1955, totalled 53.5 million francs, or 6.4 million francs more than in January, 1954.

Cantonal

The accounts for the year of 1954 of the canton of Zurich close with a *credit* balance of 14,210,222.—frs.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The balance-sheet for the year 1954, of the canton of Zug shows a *credit* balance of 970.—frs.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

During the month of January, 1955, 277 traffic accidents were reported in the canton of Berne. 143 were injured of whom three succumbed to their injuries.

* * *

The French Ambassador in Berne, Monsieur Etienne Dennery, has been officially received by the Government of the canton Fribourg, he also paid a visit to the University of Fribourg.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

A collection made in the R.C. churches of Switzerland for the benefit of the University of Fribourg, brought in 541,000.—frs., or 30,000.—frs. more than last year.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The elections for the Grand Council of the canton of Ticino show the following strength of the parties: Socialists: 10 seats (one gain); Catholic-Conservatives: 25 seats (no change); Peasant, Trade and Bourgeois Party: 2 seats (no change); Radicals 28 seats (one loss); Communists: 0 (0).

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The town of Lausanne is competing for the honour of holding the Olympic Games which will take place in 1960. A decision will be taken on the 12th of June in Paris. Other competitors are the towns of Rome, Budapest and Brussels.

[A.T.S.]

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