

Dr. Victor Umbricht

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DR. VICTOR UMBRICHT.

The Federal Council has elected Dr. Victor Umbricht, at present Deputy-Manager of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) in Washington, to the post of Director of the Federal Finance Administration, in succession to Dr. Max Ikle, who has been appointed General Manager of the Swiss National Bank.

On behalf of his many friends in London we extend to him our heartiest congratulations on this very important appointment. We understand that he will take up his post in Berne at the end of March, 1957.

* * *

Dr. Umbricht was born in Untersiggenthal (Ct. Aargau) in 1915. He studied *juris prudencia* at the Universities of Berne, Lausanne and Paris, and took his doctor's degree in International Law at the University of Berne. He won an International scholarship for a dissertation on "International Law".

Having acquired the patent as an advocate, and made a member of the Bar, he acted from 1939-1941 as recorder to the Tribunal of Baden. He very soon gained a reputation as leader for the defence in cases dealing with defaulters brought before military courts, and his defence for the "Spanienfahrer" (Swiss nationals having taken part in the Spanish civil war) added to his reputation as a shrewd and painstaking lawyer.

In 1941, Dr. Umbricht entered the Diplomatic Service, and within a few months was sent to Ankara

where he, after a hazardous and dangerous journey through the Balkans, arrived in February, 1942, and where he acted until March, 1946, in the capacity of Commercial Attaché for the Middle East. In 1946, he was transferred to the Swiss Legation in London with the rank of 2nd Secretary of Legation, being promoted three years later (1949) to 1st Secretary, and in 1950 to Counsellor of Legation, in which capacity he was in charge of financial and commercial affairs at the Legation.

During his *séjour* in London he had taken part in numerous economic negotiations between Great Britain and Switzerland, and has also represented our country for a number of years on the International Wheat Council Meetings, which were held at Geneva, Lisbon and Washington.

In London, where he stayed for seven years, he had maintained a close contact with the Swiss Colony, and his many addresses on financial and economic subjects given at meetings of the Swiss Economic Council, Swiss Mercantile Society, N.S.H., and to Swiss Societies in the Provinces, were greatly appreciated.

In 1953, Dr. Umbricht was appointed a member of the Management of the "World Bank" in Washington. This institution which is under the auspices of U.N.O. consists of 54 member countries. Switzerland not being a member of the United Nations Organisation does not belong to the "World Bank", and therefore the appointment of a Swiss national to a senior executive post by the Board was at the time considered an honour not only to Dr. Umbricht, but also to our country.

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