

# Gottlieb Duttweiler

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Fernand Werthenschlag, aged 77, head of the information department of the Swiss Industries' Fair in Basle from 1920-1951.

Frau Frida Hoffmann-Moosherr, 99, widow of the late Federal Councillor Hoffmann.

Grossrat Adolf Wirth from Haegglingen died at the age of 83; well-known politician, founder of the firm of Riwisa A.G. Haegglingen, and chairman of the Sanatorium Sanitas at Davos for many years.

Raymond Clavien died at Sion at the age of 63; local politician, leader of several Valaisan agricultural associations and president of the Farmers' Union of the Suisse Romande.

Professor H. Luedeke died in Basle at the age of 73. He was Professor of English at the Basle University from 1930 till 1959.

Prof. Dr. ing. Mirko Gottfried Ros, former professor at the Federal University of Technology in Zurich, died at the age of 83.

Professor Hans Wehberg, General Secretary of the Institute of International Law, died at Geneva, aged 77.

Arthur Fischer-Streitmann, well-known actor, died in Basle at the age of 78.

## GOTTLIEB DUTTWEILER

1888-1962

As we reported in our last issue, National Councillor Gottlieb Duttweiler died on 8th June at the age of nearly 74 years. He was born in Zurich on 15th August 1888, a citizen of Zurich and Oberweningen. His father was manager of the "Lebensmittelverein Zurich". Young Gottlieb went to school in Zurich and afterwards served an apprenticeship with an agency for food imports. He spent a year in France and in 1910 entered the services of Pfister & Co. in which firm he became a partner in 1917. His business travels took him to Turkey, Asia Minor, Trieste, Genoa, Barcelona, Malaga and New York. In 1923 he and his wife emigrated to Brazil, where he became co-owner of a coffee plantation. But as his wife could not stand the climate he returned to Switzerland two years later. On 25th August 1925, together with Fritz Keller and Rudolf Peter, he founded the Migros A.G. They started with only a few lorries which circulated as "mobile shops". This undertaking succeeded rapidly. In 1935 he founded the "Hotel-Plan" organisation in order to help the tourist industry, but above all to enable people of modest means to enjoy holidays at low and inclusive terms. In 1941 he transformed the Migros A.G. into a co-operative society which today has 593,410 members. Duttweiler was the first man to start self-service shops in Switzerland and later he introduced Migros markets, founded the crude oil refinery Frisia A.G. at Emden, the Migros Bank and other companies.

When the Migros was ten years old, Gottlieb Duttweiler started his own independent political movement, the "Landesring der Unabhängigen". The paper "Die Tat" was published as a weekly information paper for his party, but on 1st October 1939 it began to appear as a daily paper.

From 1935 to 1940 and again from 1943 to 1949 Duttweiler was a member of the National Council, and from 1949 to 1951 he represented the Canton of Zurich in the Council of States. From 1951 until his death he was again a member of the National Council, this time representing the Canton of Berne. During the 27 years of his parliamentary career he sat on many important commissions, e.g., foreign policy, customs tariffs, etc.

But Duttweiler was not only interested in commerce and politics. He also founded a number of educational and cultural institutions. He started schools and classes for adult education in large towns as well as in smaller places. His "Club House Concerts" were a great success, as were his other ventures of a similar nature.

One of the organisations he created was in the interests of the Swiss abroad who had lost their livelihood during the war. Having lived so much outside Switzerland himself, he always remembered his compatriots abroad and identified himself with their concerns again and again.

To say that Gottlieb Duttweiler was a most enterprising and hard-working man is somewhat an understatement. He was full of tremendous vitality and energy and a real fighter. He fought antiquated commercialism on one hand, and on the other he was antagonistic to big monopolies and trusts. The competition which his business ventures created certainly contributed to maintaining lower prices. It stirred up the Swiss retail trade, unfortunately sometimes at the expense of the small retailer. His political views, too, were often unorthodox and controversial, and I have heard him called the "enfant terrible" of the Swiss political arena. He had many adversaries and fighting certainly was the spice of life to him.

Now "Dutti", as he was affectionately called by his friends and admirers — and disparagingly by his opponents — has gone to rest. It is said that Zurich has never seen such a funeral as that of Gottlieb Duttweiler on 13th June. The late National Councillor was an outstanding personality, and friends and foes alike agree that he was one of the great Swiss of our times. The fact that there was a remarkable absence of hatred or bitter feelings in the many obituaries that appeared all over the country speaks well both for him and his adversaries, who gave him credit and even, if reluctantly, admiration.

Mariann.

## ERRATUM

We regret that a mistake occurred in the last issue when it was said that the *Swiss Bank Corporation* celebrated a double anniversary. This should have been the *Union Bank of Switzerland* (Schweizerische Bankgesellschaft), which celebrated the centenary jubilee of the foundation of the two banks (Bank of Winterthur and Toggenburger Bank) whose merger created the Union Bank of Switzerland in 1912, with head office in Zurich.

The *Swiss Bank Corporation* (Schweizerischer Bankverein) was established in 1872. Its head office is in Basle and the London office at 99 Gresham Street, E.C.2.

The error in translation was not ours, as we received the news in *English* from the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade (OSEC, Office Suisse pour l'Expansion Commerciale) in Lausanne. But we apologise for any inconvenience caused.