

New agrrements

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Nevertheless we should not forget the other side of the medal — bad consequences of the continuing economic boom and we should consult our consciences whether we could not as individuals do something to prevent excesses in speculation, rise of cost of living and other unhealthy development. "It is not easy" President Spuehler said, "but it will have to be tried, seriously and with good will."

We need unity all the more as the new year would bring to the fore the vexed question of European integration. "We Swiss", he confirmed, "feel ourselves culturally and historically as part of Europe and know well that our fate is tied up with hers. We are therefore ready to open our doors to a larger economic European unity. But we cannot give up the principle of our neutrality, and the basis of our federalistic democracy which allows the citizen to decide all major cantonal and federal matters by way of plebiscite." The speaker referred to the seeming inevitability of big happenings in face of which man felt powerless. Where the strength of the individual was weak, let him combine with others. That applied to men as well as nations, whether in trade, science or help to others. He particularly referred to the Swiss abroad who would be of invaluable assistance in common international endeavours. Bundespräsident Spuehler concluded with the assurance that by accepting our daily duties, conscientiously carrying out our work and by an understanding attitude towards our neighbours we would find the way to tackle the larger tasks in the country and the world.

(Partly based on news received by courtesy of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

NEW AGREEMENTS

An important new agreement on social security has been arrived at with Italy. It covers questions of insurance for invalidity, old age, dependents, industrial accidents, family allowances to agricultural workers and small farmers.

An additional clause concerning widows' pensions has been incorporated into the agreement on social security between Denmark and Switzerland.

In June 1961 the Confederation and the Federal German Republic signed an agreement regarding compensation for Swiss Victims of Nazi persecution. This agreement has now become valid and the German Government is paying ten million Reichsmarks to be used at the discretion of the Federal Council within the framework of the agreement.

The agreement between Switzerland and Chile regarding the use of Swiss banking credits for financing deliveries of Swiss investment goods to Chile has been extended to 1st December 1963.

From 1st January payments to and from Greece are freely transferable according to a new agreement between the Confederation and the Hellenic Government.

The Federal Council has empowered the Swiss Observer at UNO to sign the international coffee convention which was the outcome of the conference of 58 countries under UN auspices last summer. The agreement brings Switzerland no measurable obligations but could be of importance from the angle of Technical Assistance to underdeveloped countries.

According to recent negotiations no more visas are required for Swiss citizens travelling to Bolivia and Cyprus for three months or less.

[A.T.S.]

NEWS FROM THE FEDERAL COURT OF JUSTICE IN LAUSANNE

At the end of November four Federal Judges handed in their resignation to the President of the National Council to take effect from 31st December.

Dr. Eduard Arnold was born in 1895 and is a citizen of Lucerne. A former National Councillor (Socialist), he was elected a Federal Judge in 1942.

Mr. Fernando Pedrini from Faido was born in 1898. He practised law at Faido and in Locarno. He was on the Ticino Cantonal Council (Radical) and became a member of the Federal Insurance Tribunal in 1931. He was in office as Federal Judge for twelve years.

Dr. Karl Dannegger, citizen of Morat, was born in 1895. He was a member of the Farmers' Party and held various posts in the Cantonal Courts. He was President of the Cantonal High Court of Berne. In 1954 he was elected a Federal Judge.

The fourth Federal Judge who retired at the end of the year is the Socialist Dr. Fritz Bachtler.

In their place four new members of the Federal Court of Justice were elected by the Federal Assembly (Parliament) on 13th December. It is interesting to note that 220 voting papers were distributed, 218 of which were returned, four of them blank. The absolute majority which had to be reached was therefore 108. Dr. Harold Huber (Socialist) had 192 votes, Dr. Rolando Forni (Radical) 181. Dr. Paul Lemp (Farmers' Party) received support from 167 and Dr. Werner Dubach (Socialist) 156 from M.P.'s. Other votes cast were 22.

Dr. Huber was born in 1912, a citizen of Winterthur. He worked in the lawyer's firm of his father which he carried on after the old gentleman's death. He started his political career at the age of thirty and joined the National Council in 1947. He is well known as a lecturer on legal subjects.

Dr. Forni is the youngest Federal Judge at 38, a citizen of Lugano. 1954 he became President of the Court of Lugano and eight years later High Court Judge of the Ticino.

Dr. Lemp was born in 1908 and hails from Attiswil (Berne). He was Secretary at the Bernese High Court for four years and since 1942 has acted as Clerk to the Federal Court in Lausanne.

Lastly, Dr. Dubach who is 58 and was born at Windisch, the son of an engine driver. In 1934 he joined the Cantonal Council of Aargau and six years later he entered the Cantonal Administration. He was elected High Court Judge of the Aargau in 1952 and has been its President since 1961.

Another election the Federal Assembly had to perform was that of the President of the Federal Court of Justice for 1963 and 1964. Federal Judge Dr. Franz Faessler from Appenzell-Innerrhoden was chosen as President, and Federal Judge Dr. Albert Comment, a Liberal, as Vice-President.

The new President is 64 and the first citizen of his Canton to join the Federal Court (1942). For the last period of office he was Vice-President.

The new deputy Federal Judge Dr. Comment originates from Courgenay (Jura Bernois) and is 69. He has been a member of the Court since 1942.

[A.T.S.]