

Two unusual birthdays

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But it will be applicable to third persons employed in Churches and similar institutions, in art studios, etc. And it will also concern members of orchestras and the stage. Apprentices, voluntary workers (Volontäre, Praktikanten) are also covered, as well as market stall holders and travelling shop assistants.

In undertakings where only members of the family are employed, the law cannot be enforced.

The old law affected 760,000 workers in some 14,000 factories. The new law will hold good for about 1.7 million employees in 260,000 undertakings.

(Based on an article by Prof. Frank Vischer in the "Basler Nachrichten" and on news received by courtesy of A.T.S. and "Schweizer. Kaufmännisches Zentralblatt".)

NEWS OF INTEREST TO THE SWISS ABROAD

The Federal Political Department informed the Cantonal Governments in a circular letter that Fr.130,570.— were spent in 1965 (just over half by the Confederation, the rest by the Cantons) on Swiss benevolent institutions and homes abroad as well as on international homes and hospitals. 138 Swiss benevolent organisations of one kind or another were at the disposal of the Swiss living abroad, 28 each alone in France and Germany. 129 have sent in their accounts but over half did not want a subsidy.

In the past year, 758 Swiss children from abroad spent a holiday in Switzerland thanks to the efforts of the "Schweizerhilfe". 646 free places were made available in families for children whose parents could not afford to pay. This year, "Das Jahr der Fünften Schweiz", Federal Councillor Tschudi has appealed for an increased effort. A special collection has been started, and contributions can be sent to "Schweizerhilfe" or "Pro Juventute".

2.8 million francs resulted from the collection on 1st August 1965, about Fr.410,000.— more than in the previous year. 25.9 million PRO PATRIA stamps were sold and a new record of badges (925,527). The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (Auslandsschweizerwerk der Neuen Helvetischen Gesellschaft) received 1.57 million francs, the Swiss schools abroad Fr.675,000.—, the Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad Fr.100,000.—. The agreed 10% of the sale of stamps went to the Swiss Art Institute (Institut für Kunstwissenschaft) and Fr.25,000.— were donated to the special fund to assist farmers who have suffered from the severe epidemic of foot and mouth disease.

Last, but not least, it was announced on 4th February, that the Parliamentary Commission of the National Council has recommended acceptance of the proposed new Constitutional Article concerning the Swiss abroad.

[A.T.S.]

SOUTH VIETNAM AND SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Red Cross has appealed to the Swiss population for funds by way of sponsorships in aid of medical help to the 800,000 refugees and the many

orphans. Swiss medical teams will be going to South Vietnam. Delegates of the Red Cross visited the prison camp at Tan Thiep near Saigon in December.

South Vietnam was recognized by the Federal Council already on 1st April 1958, and a Consul is established in Saigon. In 1962 the Swiss Government agreed to a request by South Vietnam to have an Ambassador in Berne, but nothing was heard afterwards. Now, a new request has been sent to Berne.

The Pope has sent a note to the Federal Council regarding a possible peace-move in the Vietnam war by the neutral States. The Federal Council answered His Holiness that it would always be ready to offer its services and above all to offer hospitality to a Vietnam Conference in Switzerland.

[A.T.S.]

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Their Majesties King Gyalmo of Sikkim and Queen Chgyal visited Switzerland early in February. The Japanese Prince and Princess Hitachi were received by the Federal President. Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands and her fiancé stayed at Gstaad, where Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy and her children also spent three weeks of winter holidays. The Duke of Edinburgh who had earlier been to Geneva, arrived at Kloten at the end of December, with Prince Charles and Princess Ann on their way to Liechtenstein. The young Prince went on ski-ing trips to the Piz Sol region in Eastern Switzerland on several occasions. The personal representative of the King of Morocco was received by the Federal President and Federal Councillor Spuehler on the last day of January. He presented a message regarding the Ben Barka affair.

The Austrian Minister of Trade Dr. Bock visited Zurich in November, and Senator Edward Kennedy was in Geneva for a meeting of CIME, the international committee for European migration. Habib Bourguiba junior, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, visited Zurich in preparation of Tunisian weeks in Zurich. A Soviet delegation of specialists in communication and tourism paid a visit to the Touring Club Suisse centre in Geneva. American students, under the patronage of "Pro Helvetia", Swissair and S.N.T.O. made a study tour of Switzerland, and 27 students of sociology from Cologne, again under the patronage of "Pro Helvetia", spent a fortnight in Switzerland studying Swiss sociological institutions. In November, seven church leaders from Eastern Germany visited Switzerland. More had been invited but did not receive permission to travel to Switzerland.

Early in February, Duke Ellington and his band gave a concert in Basle. The famous "old lady" of the German film Tilla Durieux (85), has also arrived in Basle to play the main part in "Langusten" at the "Komoedie".

[A.T.S.]

TWO UNUSUAL BIRTHDAYS

On 28th January, not only one but two Swiss citizens were able to celebrate their 103rd birthdays. Frau Sophie Widmer-Salm reached this venerable age at Lenzburg. She is in the best of health and has now beaten the record set up by her mother who died just before she reached 103.

Also in the best of health was Mr. Fritz Mueller at Ipsach, Canton of Berne, when he celebrated his 103rd birthday. He originates from Aeschi but has lived on his farm at Ipsach all his life, and every morning he tours his estate, weather permitting.

[A.T.S.]