

State visit by the king of Norway

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STATE VISIT BY THE KING OF NORWAY

Switzerland has recently had a number of royal visitors; The Shah of Persia and his family spent winter-sports holidays there, and King Constantine of Greece and his Queen were in Zurich where the monarch had several consultations with Prof. Luzius Ruedi, Director of the Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic of the Cantonal Hospital. But on 1st April, a reigning monarch arrived in Switzerland on a *State Visit*: King Olaf V of Norway.

At Kloten Airport, the King and his party, including the Norwegian Foreign Minister, were received by Federal Councillor Celio and members of the Zurich Cantonal and Municipal Governments. Hundreds of Norwegian residents in Switzerland were there to greet their Sovereign. A special train took the royal party to Kehrsatz near Berne, where the President of the Confederation welcomed the King. During the State Visit, the royal party resided at the beautiful Bernese patrician country estate "Lohn". It was declared extraterritorial, i.e. it was Norwegian territory where the King was host.

At the Federal Palace in Berne, *Bundespräsident* Spuehler officially welcomed His Majesty, and he referred to the ties which united the two countries. Technical, industrial and economic co-operation between Norway and Switzerland was considerable. (*Note : Swiss exports to Norway amounted to 191.8m. francs, and Norwegian imports into Switzerland to 75.7m. francs. At the time of the King's visit to the Confederation, a Norwegian trade delegation was in Switzerland, discussing trade problems.*) King Olaf, in his reply, thanked the Swiss people for their warm welcome and expressed his great admiration for the Swiss, especially their democratic way of life and their humanitarian activities. He said Switzerland should serve as an example for a future Europe. One of the interesting facts he brought out in his address, was that the first five Norwegian students registered at the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich well over 100 years ago, and today nearly 400 students from Norway were being trained at Swiss universities and other academic establishments.

The heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the Federal Government paid the King a courtesy visit at "Lohn" later in the afternoon, and in the evening, the Federal Council (complete except for Mr. Schaffner who was on holiday) gave a State Banquet at the Berne History Museum. Among the 69 guests were the Presidents of the two Chambers and of the Federal Tribunal, the Chief of the General Staff, representatives of the Political Department and of various Cantonal and Municipal Governments.

On the second day of the State Visit, the King visited the Jungfrauoch, accompanied by Federal Councillor Bonvin (in mountaineering outfit). Federal Councillor Gnaegi accompanied King Olaf on his visit to Schaffhausen, where an exhibition of paintings by the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch is being held at the Allerheiligen Museum. On his return journey, King Olaf was received in Zurich by the local authorities, and some of the famous "gnomes", too, were at the reception. In the evening, the King entertained the Federal Council at a dinner in a Berne hotel, to which the six Norwegian Consuls in Switzerland and a number of prominent Norwegians were invited, in addition to the representatives of Swiss Parliament, Army and cantonal and municipal authorities, 95 guests in all.

On the last day of the State Visit, the farewell visit by the Federal President and Federal Councillor Tschudi at the "Lohn" estate terminated the official stay in Berne, and the King and his party left for Geneva in a special

train. He paid a visit to the seat of the International Red Cross Committee, where the latest colour film "*Il s'en est encore besoin de nous*" was shown. Later, he met the Norwegian Colony in Geneva, and a luncheon at "La Grange" was offered to the Monarch by the Geneva authorities. He left Switzerland for Oslo mid-afternoon.

So far the bare facts. Nothing has been said of the background of the visit, of the guards of honour by Swiss militia men, of the red carpets and the laurel plants, the thousands of flags and flowers mostly in the Norwegian colours, nothing of the organising feats by various police corps, the accompanying helicopter overhead watching traffic, the floodlit buildings, the military bands and the yodellers at the Kleine Scheidegg, the national anthems and toasts drunk in choice wines, nothing of the golden figures decorating the festive table at the History Museum in Berne, nothing of the delicious specialities served at the official banquets, and above all nothing yet of the enthusiastic welcome accorded to the popular King of the Norwegians. It was all there, in Berne, Zurich, Schaffhausen and Geneva, a truly worthy reception arranged for a distinguished man, Swiss democratic hospitality extended to a Reigning Monarch.

(Compiled from news received by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland recently:

Alois Knuessel (89), Kuessnacht am Rigi, farmer; member of the District Council from 1908 to 1912 and from then to 1936 of the Schwyz Parliament; for the subsequent 8 years member of the Cantonal Government; from 1942 to 1944 *Landammann* of Schwyz (Conservative).

Werner Bloesch (63), Bienne, watch-case manufacturer; President of the Bienne Citizens' Commune.

Dr. Etienne Schnoeller (70), Chur, lawyer and economist; in banking till the 'thirties when he changed to journalism; Editor-in-Chief of "Nation" in Berne during the second world war; from 1958 to 1966 Editor of the "Neue Bündner Zeitung" in Chur.

Marc Revaz (74), Vernayaz near Martigny, well-known political personality; for 25 years member of the Valais Parliament.

Jean Meyer (90), Gottlieben (Thurgau); the last professional fisherman still active at the village on the Untersee.

Reinhold Wiesmann (89), Zurich, former chief of the Zurich branch of the Swiss Telegraphic Agency (A.T.S.); editor of the "Landboten" in Winterthur until 1906 when he joined the A.T.S. first in Basle and then in Berne; from 1916 in Zurich.

Dr. Léon Wohlmann (67), Zurich, from 1931 to his retirement *Vormundschaftssekretär* of the town of Zurich; well-known member of the Jewish community; President of the Swiss Zionists; represented Swiss Jewry at international Zionist conferences; writer for the "Israelitisches Wochenblatt" and prominent member of the *Cultusgemeinde* in Zurich.

Jean Robert Gerstenhauer (68), Lausanne, General Manager of "Publicitas" in which company he began his career in Barcelona in 1921; President of the "Verband Schweizerischer Annoncen Expeditionen".

[A.T.S.]