

Recent deaths in Switzerland

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on the increase. The boss, who worked in the next office, was busy phoning Bern and Interpol about my case, but I was told this only later. Mr. "A" went to see him at least four times during the deposition, never forgetting to tell his colleague to keep a good watch over me. Eventually, the boss came himself into the office. He was a gruff chap and looked at me menacingly. Thinking that he should do his useful bit in the inquest, he asked me how I had spent my money in Zurich. So, emulating their thoroughness I told him: "five francs for the coach from the airport, 60 centimes for the luggage deposit, 50 centimes for the tram to Bellevueplatz, 6 francs 30 for my lunch, 40 centimes for a paper, 50 for a tram ride to Voltastrasse, 50 again to reach Romerhof . . ." but the interrogation did not proceed much longer along that line. Mr. "A" was so meticulous that at one time I burst out in laughter. He blushed and was visibly shaken. I believe that my irreverence had chipped a crack in his bulwark, the machinery of which he was an integral part. His sudden weakness showed me that, beneath the cast of a paragon of the Zurich Police, there was still some humanity left.

In the end, Mr. "A" became very decent and even offered me cigarettes. We had a frank conversation in which I questioned his methods. His answer was straightforward and firm like a faith: "every man brought to me," he said, "has to be considered a suspect right from the start."

"Fair enough", I said, "but my behaviour has clearly pointed to my innocence: you have had all the time to check my statement by contacting Barclay's branch at the West London Air Terminal, you found strictly nothing incriminating in my luggage, I didn't approach the ticket-office with a suspicious look and I did not try to run for it when the clerk found that my note was forged."

"I've had the most innocent-looking people" he answered, "smiling and angelic, but when I search them in the waiting-room they turn out to be crooks. This has happened time after time and I could spend a night telling you stories. Therefore we cannot admit any exceptions. We have searched you because it had to be done—better dispatch this formality right from the start, so it's done and we can clear you on that point."

"But why not at least give some kind of *explanation* to the unfortunate fellow who, as in my case, has been given forged banknotes and warn him politely of the kind of inconvenience he will have to be submitted to."

I got no answer to this question and I don't think I brought the message home. What he (and the police in general) had done was both necessary and legal and therefore there couldn't be any ground for misgivings. That an innocent man had been badly inconvenienced was quite irrelevant,

the police were there to deal with criminals, not susceptible humans. This, at least, is how I believe Mr. "A"'s mind ticked. He has bathed all his career in the well-oiled gearing of police administration and loves it. He is profoundly convinced of the police's excellence as the guardian of a good society and it must be psychologically impossible for him to believe that the police could possibly make mistakes.

Our conversation had to stop because of duty. Mr. "A" asked me, somewhat embarrassed, whether I would return to the waiting-room while he and his colleagues would check my statement by calling at my friends. This time I was allowed to have my cigarettes and reading-matter. It was half past five and I had been detained for six hours. The waiting-room was to be my abode for another two hours. My most relaxing distraction was to decipher the colourful (but unreportable) messages traced on the door by my predecessors. The boss of the department payed me a visit and told me that Mr. "A" had got lost in the countryside north of Zurich on his way back from seeing my hosts of the previous night, who lived at Hinteregg, at an address I had indicated in Schwerzenbach. But after having had two confirmations of my statement, Mr. "A" radioed to headquarters and I was set free after a total detention of over eight hours.

The next morning, every bank in Switzerland was informed of the forgeries and within ten days, four men (two Germans and two Englishmen, if my memory is correct) were arrested in a Munich villa where 1200 forged notes were found. In London, two detectives rang at my home and were received by the housecleaner, who resolutely refused to let them in!

To sum up, my legitimate complaints are that I was detained with no explanations, morally injured in being considered a criminal, given no food and forbidden contacts with the outside world, shamelessly obliged to strip off my clothes and (for the record) accompanied in a place where one usually prefers privacy. Above this, my passport was kept for a week and I received *no apologies*.

Such a misadventure could have happened to any one—headmaster, butcher, chartered accountant, entrepreneur, scientist or clergyman, and I am sure it would have been a very serious blow to anyone clinging hard to his self-esteem.

I was told to expect a nonsuit from the Attorney-General in Bern. It hasn't come yet and I am still waiting. Barclays Bank has refunded me ten pounds: at least they believe in my innocence. I hope that Miss McCabe's adventure, if it is really as dramatic as reported in the "Sunday Times", whips up a good, devastating gale in Swiss opinion so that such treatment will be completely undreamt of in future.

P.M.B.

RECENT DEATHS IN

SWITZERLAND

Johannes Klaesi (80), founder of the firm "Nuxo" in Rapperswil. Applying the dietetic ideas of Dr. Bircher and Dr. Fischer, he pioneered into the use of nuts as a source of fats and proteins.

Paul Boesch (80), internationally renowned painter and drawer. He produced a number of books on heraldry and was a prominent painter on glass. He designed numerous pro-juventute and pro-patria stamps and produced admirable wood-cuts. He was well known to children for illustrating the Pestalozzi Calendar. His works decorate a large number of public buildings in Switzerland.

Professor Eugen Meyer-Peter, professor in hydraulics and civil engineering at the Polytechnic in Zurich. He was director of the Institute of Hydraulic Constructions and has made extensive contributions in this field of engineering.

The Rev. Paul Béguin (80), director of the hospital of St. Loup (Vd) for thirty-five years.

Casimir Raymond (76), sculptor and painter. Casimir Raymond is well known for his creation of the relief in the chapel of Montfaucon in Lausanne, for his statues in the Palais de Beaulieu and for his busts of Ramuz and General Guisan. As a painter on glass, he designed the windows of the churches of Romainmotier, Echallens and Lutry.

National Councillor Armin Haller (58), of a heart attack. Former secretary of the Bernese union of shopkeepers, founder and president of the cantonal federation of employees' unions, general agent for the "Neuchateloise" insurance company, publicist of the foundation "for the aged" and founder of "action p", a self-help organisation for pensioners.

Dr. H. C. Hans Noll, ornithologist, (84). Teacher for many years at the educational centres of Oberkirch (SG) and Glarisegg, he has taught biology at the Realgymnasium of Basle since 1932. He is well known for a two-volume comprehensive work on hatching birds.

Dr. H. C. Clavel, inventor and air-pioneer. Also well known for historical research which earned him an honoris-causa-doctorate from the University of Basle. He has contributed to the foundation of an antique museum in the same town.

Emile Gos, photographer and film-producer, (81). He was well known for his illustrations of the albums conceived by his brother, Francois Gros, such as "Au Pays des Muerans", and "Les Alpes de Savoie". He has produced a number of mountain films, in particular, "La Croix du Cervin".

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