

Birthdays and anniversaries

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BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

We are happy to announce that **Mr. W. Zuber** of The Grove, Grove Road, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, will celebrate his 80th birthday on 29th April.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Keller (Zollikon) will have been married 41 years on 2nd April.

The following readers will be having birthdays within the next few weeks: Mrs. K. Michel on 1st April, and Mr. Th. Haller on 2nd of the month. The same day, Mr. P. Lerch will be 79. Mrs. Ch. Rabes will have her birthday on 11th April, and Mr. L. Portmann will be 86 on 13th. Dr. H. Gysin (Binningen BL) will be 66 on 16th of the month, and Mrs. W. Schedler has her birthday on 20th. Mrs. E. Stauffer will be 82 on 22nd April, and Mr. E. Zwicky will reach the same age on the same day. Mr. G. Keller (Zollikon) will be 74 on 23rd April, and Mr. F. Delaloye will be 92 on 26th April.

To all these readers and any others whose birthdays or anniversaries are in May, we send congratulations and best wishes.

FRIEDRICH TRAUGOTT WAHLEN, 80

It is with great pleasure that we announce the 80th birthday on 10th April of the former Federal Councillor Dr. F. T. Wahlen, of Humboldtstrasse 39, 3000 Berne.

Friedrich Traugott Wahlen was born at Mirchel (Berne), son of an Emmental country teacher, and a citizen of Trimstein-Rubigen. He studied agronomy at the Federal Institute of Technology in Zürich and acquired a Dr. sc. techn. He went to Canada where he was put in charge of all agricultural research stations. From 1929 to 1943, he was at the head of the Federal Agricultural Research Institute in Zürich/Oerlikon. Dr. Wahlen was on the Council of the Swiss National Exhibition in Zürich in 1939. During the Second World War, he was appointed by the Federal Council to look after the country's food production; he introduced his famous "Plan Wahlen".

From 1943, for six years, he was Professor for Plant Cultivation at the ETH. In 1942, he was elected Councillor of States for the Canton of Zürich (BBG Party), an office he filled for seven years. United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) called Prof. Wahlen to Washington as Director of its Agricultural Section, (in Rome since 1951). He became Deputy-Director General of FAO in 1958.

On 11th December, 1958, he was elected onto the Government as successor of Dr. Markus Feldmann who had died suddenly. First, Federal Councillor Wahlen was in charge of Justice and Police and also, temporarily, the Department of Communications. For one year he was in charge of the *Volkswirtschaftsdepartement*, and in 1961, the year in which he was President of the Confederation, he became Switzerland's Foreign Minister, a position he filled with great distinction for four years. He retired at the end of 1965.

Four universities have honoured him with a doctorate; Goettingen and Laval (Quebec) of agronomy, Zürich of medicine and Basle of law. In 1934, he was awarded the Marcel-Benoist Prize; he is also a member of the Royal Swedish Academy.

On the occasion of his 70th birthday, the "Agrarpolitische Revue" was published as a special issue on the fight against hunger in the world, a problem for whose solution Prof. Wahlen has worked all his life.

To understand the ideas behind the achievements of this statesman and expert on land and the food growing on it, we should read his book "Dem Gewissen verpflichtet" ("Pledged to one's Conscience"). Through its pages shine the great sagacity, the deep wisdom, the strong faith and exemplary humanity of this outstanding Bernese.

But a man like Dr. Wahlen could not retire. He has done a great deal of work in connection with the total revision of the Federal Constitution;

he was a member of the "Commission for Good Services to the Jura", and he was leader of a special group of experts set up by UN and FAO in 1966: "World Nutrition Programme" which examined the settlement scheme in Lower Egypt. One could go on with the rich catalogue of Dr. Wahlen's work. We Swiss abroad have had a good and loyal friend in him, and we owe him a debt of gratitude for all he has done for us. *The Swiss Observer* is proud that *Alt-Bundesrat* Wahlen has been a regular reader for many years.

We send him warm wishes for an enjoyable birthday and for good health and continued satisfaction.

M.M.

TWO NEW FOOTPATHS IN UPPER VALAIS

Two new footpaths are now open in Upper Valais. The "Höhenweg Vispertaler Sonnenberg" covers a distance of around 15 miles from Zeneggen (reached by post-coach from Visp) to Sankt Niklaus. The eight and a half hour walk can also be covered in several separate stages. Contrasting with this high-altitude route is the second new footpath which links Belalp and Riederfurka. This is known as the "Untere Aletschweg" and the five and a half hour tramp provides an introduction to the Great Aletsch Glacier area, the route now running below the Glacier.

LUCERNE OPENS MODERNISED YOUTH HOSTEL

Lucerne has re-opened its modernised youth hostel. It has a total of 206 beds in 39 rooms and two dormitories with 28 beds each. The hostel is located at Sedelstrasse 12 and is reached by taking Bus Nr. 2 from the railway station to the Schlossberg stop. From there it is a 15 minute walk away.



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