

This and that

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carry the full 4% (plus disablement contribution) which is generally considered too much.

The Organisation of the Swiss abroad in conjunction with some friends in Parliament have taken up the matter with the federal AHV insurance authorities. The suggestion was that the Swiss abroad should be allowed to base their contributions on the nett income, rather than on the gross.

A proposal of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique in London was that contributions for the Swiss abroad should be limited at their own choice; the insurance could be worked on a commercial basis, with the addition of a reasonable percentage as social contribution.

There have been no changes in this respect in the sixth revision. The higher benefits, however, apply also to members of the AHV abroad.

The AHV was created as a basic insurance, the provisions of which were to be supplemented individually by saving and additional insurance. Today the call for an adequate annuity is heard more and more, specially from fear of devaluation due to inflation which imperils private saving efforts. Too much expansion of the AHV would, however, itself further inflationary tendencies.

(Based on information from OSEC, Agence Télégraphique Suisse, "Schweizerisches Kaufmännisches Zentralblatt" and "Basler Nachrichten").

FEDERAL SUBSIDIES 1962

Early in January, the subsidies granted by the Confederation in 1962 were published. The following table shows how the money was allocated. The figures are in millions. The second column shows increase or decrease compared with the previous year.

	1962		In percentages	
			1961	1962
Agriculture, cereals, alcohol				
administration	353.16	+4.5	46.0	45.6
Communications (road, rail, air and water)	126.26	-33.1	21.0	16.3
Health services	87.29	+5.5	10.8	11.3
Education and training	39.30	+3.9	4.7	5.1
Culture, science, art	37.60	+10.3	3.6	4.8
Cost of living increase, housing	37.31	+6.8	4.0	4.8
International aid schemes and institutions	22.29	+7.1	2.0	2.9
Welfare	22.02	-0.5	3.0	2.8
Industry, trade, commerce	16.74	+9.1	1.0	2.2
Water improvement	12.24	+1.6	1.4	1.6
Forestry	11.31	+0.3	1.5	1.5
Spare time education, sport	3.38	+0.4	0.4	0.4
Law and politics	2.50	+0.7	0.2	0.3
Labour market	2.34	-0.4	0.3	0.3
Animal protection, fishing	0.47	0.0	0.1	0.1
	774.21	+16.2	100	100

Industry, trade and commerce include a contribution of eight million francs to the EXPO. A little more than a third of all the subsidies (269 million francs) went to the Cantons.

[A.T.S.]

THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF NEUTRAL SWITZERLAND

Several states have asked the Swiss Confederation to safeguard their interests in countries with which they have broken off diplomatic relations: Rumania in Spain since 1946; the Philippines in Bulgaria since February 1950; Iran in Israel since February 1950; the United States in Cuba since January 1961; Belgium in the United Arab Republic since February 1961; Togo in Nigeria since October 1961; Argentina in Cuba since February 1962; Guatemala in Cuba since March 1962; Portugal in Senegal since August 1963 and Great Britain in Guatemala since August 1963. Switzerland agreed to represent the interests of Togo in Nigeria as part of its assistance to developing countries and in anticipation of the time when the young African state will be able to see to its interests unaided.

[S.N.T.O.]

THIS AND THAT

A Golf Course at the Foot of the Jungfrau is to be opened in May 1964. Situated in the lovely Lütschinen valley south of Lauterbrunnen, only thirty minutes by car from Interlaken, the nine-hole links in an ideal setting are sure to add to the many attractions of this traditional vacation area.

"Central Heating" for Rails. Switch heating as installed recently in Goeschenen station on the north side of the Gotthard tunnel is certainly no luxury. On the contrary, the 1,200 propane fuelled burners will make possible considerable savings as regards clearing away the snow and furthermore will assure adequate and safe service despite snow and ice.

The Thirty-fourth International Automobile Exhibition in Geneva will take place from 12th to 22nd March. According to a report by the organizers, a record number of participants have registered who will display their products on an extensive site of 40,000 square metres.

Landscapes by Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918) will be on show in a special exhibition at the Zurich Museum of Fine Arts to open end of February. This will be the first exhibit of its kind and particularly interesting to foreign visitors who will thus have the opportunity of becoming better acquainted with the works by this outstanding Swiss painter whose mountain views are unequalled in European art.

"The American International School of Zurich", founded last year upon the initiative of American parents and teachers, is open to pupils of all nationalities, provided they are proficient enough in English to follow classes. The graduates of this high school may qualify for American colleges or the upper grades of Swiss "Gymnasien". It is purely a day school and pupils from out of town have to find board and lodging elsewhere.

[S.N.T.O.]