

Parliamentary session

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1967)**

Heft 1515

PDF erstellt am: **29.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686058>

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in the nation's railways is 2,973 billion francs, and the cog railways and funiculars represent 109 million francs in investment capital. Much of this can be considered investment in the tourist trade.

Switzerland has direct air connections with all major European cities and all continents. Swissair, the Swiss national airline, has a network covering more than 136,000 kilometres (85,000 miles). In 1965, Swissair carried a total of 2,176,796 passengers and covered 2,436 billion passenger-kilometers. It is impossible to say just how many of the airline's passengers were tourists, and thus difficult to estimate how much of its 360 million francs in capital investments may be deemed an investment in tourism.

The Swiss midlands, the Jura and the Pre-Alps are covered by a dense network of primary and secondary roads, and the nation's 22 Alpine highways are an attraction which draws hundreds of thousands of foreign automobiles each summer. Since 1952, Switzerland has spent more than 6 billion francs on highway construction and maintenance. Since 1960, work has been in progress on a 1,125-mile network of highways to serve transit traffic of which more than 850 miles will be motorways. Of that total, about 193 miles have already been opened for use. The Federal Government's total expenditure on this National Road System since its inception have been 2.9 billion francs.

The ships which ply the Swiss lakes are almost exclusively pleasure craft. Thus, in contrast to the nation's roads and railways, they may be regarded as a purely touristic investment. There are 26 steamships with a total capacity of 24,250 passengers, and 88 diesel ships with a capacity of 32,348 passengers. Total value of Swiss lake navigation in 1963 was 27.3 million francs.

Resorts and schools

There are, of course, extensive touristic investments in every resort. To mention just a few: outdoor facilities (parks, walking paths); Switzerland's 89 spa hotels and high altitude sanatoria (6,870 beds); ice rinks; casino and music pavilions; in the high mountains: 526 ski lifts, 44 chair lifts, 29 combination ski- and chair-lifts, 168 cable-cars, nine elevators, sledge-lifts and other devices, all of which have a combined peak capacity of 311,712 passengers per hour.

Last but not least on the inventory of Switzerland's touristic investments are the approximately 1,100 private educational institutions of all kinds, located on the shores of many Swiss lakes and in mountain districts. Like the hotels, they represent an important factor in the national economy. During the winter of 1964/65, there were about 9,000 foreign students registered at Switzerland's 10 universities.

In addition to those enumerated above, there is of course a wide range of subsidiary businesses and services which are involved in the touristic industry to a substantial degree: travel agencies, souvenir shops, news stalls at railway terminals, points of interest, art collections, museums, etc.

All these examples adequately demonstrate that the touristic industry is not a narrow branch of the economy limited to hotels and restaurants. It is closely related to such diverse branches as railways, airlines, roads textiles and watches, spas and rest homes, schools, sport facilities — nearly every aspect of Swiss economy. To quote an American slogan: "Tourism is not one industry, it is all industries".

Swiss National Tourist Office.

PARLIAMENTARY SESSION

The first week of the parliamentary winter session brought the surprise of Federal Councillor Chaudet's resignation. The main business were debates concerning the financial state of the Confederation, especially with regard to the 1967 budget which predicts a deficit of 432m. francs. (*A special report will be published in one of the next issues.*)

The second week, too, was partly devoted to financial matters, to the new law on administrative procedure and the revision of postal rates. The latter was accepted in the National Council, including the cancellation of postage privileges (*Portofreiheit*). In the Council of States, the President had to give the casting vote in this matter, which he did in favour of dropping the privileges, and with this, there will be no more free postage for authorities.

The National Council approved the report by the Government, on the increase in duty on imported oils and fats, which had been made on 1st November in accordance with the new agricultural law. The majority in the National Council agreed with the Council of States, which had approved, in their last session, the distribution of the 106.8m. profit of the Alcohol Administration, i.e. 48.6m. each to Confederation and Cantons and 9m. to the equalisation fund of the *Alkoholverwaltung*. It was in the last week, too, that the results of the plebiscite of 16th October regarding the special Constitutional Article for the Swiss Abroad were confirmed.

The United Federal Assembly (National Council and Council of States together) met on 14th December to elect a new Federal Councillor.

Immediately after Federal Councillor Chaudet's resignation, the powers that be got busy. The Canton of Ticino wanted a member in the Government. Vaud insisted on the traditional claim of always being represented. Geneva, too, wanted to have a member in the Federal Council again. Various names were mentioned: Councillor of States Bolla (Ticino), the two Ticinesi National Councillors Galli and Celio, the *Syndic* of Lausanne Chevallaz, the Liberal Glasson from Fribourg and the Genevese Radical Schmitt. Up to the last moment, National Councillor Nello Celio had hesitated to stand for election, but when he did, he was chosen in the first vote by 136 (117 absolute majority). Thus the privilege of the so-called *Bundesratskantone*, Zurich, Vaud and Berne, has finally been broken.

Federal Councillor Roger Bonvin was elected President of the Confederation for 1967, the first Valaisan member of the Government since the Constitution came into force in 1848. He received 190 out of 236 votes. Surprisingly low was the number of votes in favour of the Vice-President, Federal Councillor Dr. Willy Spuehler who had only 124 out of 229 votes; 70 voting slips were returned blank, a sure sign of disapproval.

The twenty-five members of the Federal Tribunal were re-affirmed for the next two years, and as President for 1967/8, Dr. André Panchaud was elected; Dr. S. Giovanoli is the new Vice-President. The new Federal Judge, in succession to Dr. C. Pometta, is Dr. Fulvio Antognini.

(By courtesy of A.T.S., "Echo" and "Schweizerisches Kaufmännisches Zentralblatt".)