

Swiss news

Objekttyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1970)**

Heft 1593

PDF erstellt am: **01.05.2024**

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standard of living for the welfare of the whole community.

This picture cannot fairly be applied to the case of Switzerland and the depressed areas of Europe for the good reason that national and customs barriers come into the picture. But the situation that has been developing on that front is similar to a Great Britain deprived of any economic planning whatever, where the richer centres would drain the poorer areas of their substance and eventually become hypertrophied. The workers who are forced to leave their families travel hundreds or thousands of miles to seek work in Switzerland send the money they earn back home. It can therefore be said that Swiss industry is contributing to the livelihood and prosperity of places as far away as Andalousia and Turkey. But it can be easily shown that the wealth generated in Switzerland by the availability of cheap foreign workers is far greater than the positive effects of their wage packets back in their own provinces. Switzerland gets more out of her foreign workers than they and their respective countries get from her.

The natural consequence of this picture is that Switzerland will continue to expand at a far greater rate than her poorer neighbours and be helped in so doing by their very poverty. The profitable export industries and the services will absorb Swiss personnel, whose homes and roads will have to be built and kept clean by an army of imported labourers. Considered with the theoretical objectivity of the observer in his ivory tower, the situation which has developed and in which Switzerland now has far too many factories and banks for her indigenous population is fundamentally unhealthy from the social and environmental point of view in Switzerland, and from the human point of view in a Europe which is still very much *une Europe des patries*.

The effect of the Schwarzenbach proposals would undoubtedly be to create a severe slump in Switzerland's economy. A slump which may take such wide proportions as to cripple Switzerland for many years and to induce a recession in Europe's and even the world's economy. But there will be another consequence in that the scope left for the expansion of Swiss economy will be found abroad. Swiss firms will only be able to increase their home activities within the bounds of an improvement in technology. The real increase of business will take place in their foreign offshoots unhampered by an inexistent manpower. Swiss industry will then be forced to contribute more actively to the economic development of other countries.

(PMB)

THE ACTUAL CONTENT OF THE INITIATIVE

The text of the second initiative against the over-foreignisation of Switzerland, on which the voting population will have to voice its opinion, runs as follows in my loose translation:

(a) *The Confederation must undertake to check the growing demographic and economic influence of an exaggerated foreign presence within the country.*

(b) *The Federal Council will be responsible for seeing that the number of foreigners in each canton does not exceed 10 per cent of the Swiss population as recorded in the 1968 census. Geneva may have a foreign element of up to 25 per cent.*

(c) *The foreigners not taken into consideration in the previous article are the seasonal workers (who come without their families and stay no longer than nine months), the borderers who come into Switzerland for daily work, university students, tourists, international officials, diplomats, scientists and other persons with special qualifications, retired people, sick and convalescing persons, hospital personnel and the staff of international charity and ecclesiastical organisations.*

(d) *No Swiss citizen shall be laid off as a result of economic restriction or industrial rationalisation as long as there are foreigners having the same jobs.*

(e) *The Federal Council may not use naturalisation as a remedy to over-foreignisation. Only those with mothers of Swiss origin and whose parents are domiciled in Switzerland when they are born will be entitled to Swiss naturalisation.*

The four preceding articles will be added to the 69th article of the Federal Constitution.

The initiative contains the following two points concerning their implementation:

(a) *Article 64-4 (that is, the above resolutions) will take effect as soon as they are accepted by the people and validated by the Federal Assembly.*

(b) *The reduction in the foreign population indicated in article (b) will have to be performed within four years of the validation by the Federal Assembly.*

The repatriation will then be stretched over four years. Approximately 300,000 foreign residents, 190,000 of whom are working, will have to leave within that delay. About 50,000 will then have to leave every year. This would mean a 1.6 per cent annual reduction in the overall active population. As the supply of labour of Swiss origin runs at about 20,000 new applicants a year, the economy would be deprived of 30,000 workers every year. A negative difference of 70,000 with the foreign labour regulations introduced last March. From 1950 to 1965 the gross national product has increased by 4.7 per cent annually, 1.9 per cent being due to an increased labour force

(0.7 per cent Swiss, 1.2 per cent foreign) and 2.8 per cent being due to increased productivity. Four years after a hypothetical ratification of the new Constitutional articles, the labour force will again climb at its native rate of 0.7 per cent annually. Assuming that the growth in productivity remains unchanged, the national product will continue to increase at only 3.5 per cent—and this only in the happy case where the four-year storm has been weathered without too much damage.

SWISS NEWS

The first prize of the Golden Rose of Montreux, an international variety show competition, was given to Czechoslovakia, and the second prize to the U.S. The British BBC entry, the "Morecambe and Wise Show" did not reap any. There were processions in the major towns on May 1st. A former Greek Minister, exiled in Switzerland, was refused the authorisation of making a speech on that day, on the grounds that refugees are not entitled to speak publicly on political subjects. Jean Möri, who was the main Swiss representative at the International Labour Organisation and the president of the organisation's jubilee session in 1969 died after a short illness. Eric Von Daeniken, the science-fiction author and hotel owner sentenced in Chur to three and a half years of jail for fraud has appealed to the court of appeal of the Federal Tribunal for a retrial. The first festival of pop music was staged in the Wankdorf Stadium in Berne. It was also the noisiest. Its six winners were the cream of the 200 amateur pop groups which had entered the competition. Switzerland has beaten France 2—1 in a football match which took place at Basle in front of 25,000 spectators. Various parties have officially expressed their strong disapproval of the Schwarzenbach Initiative. The liberal parties and the radicals are at one to condemn it. The liberals termed it "mad bloodletting". The elections to the Great Council of Berne have left the power balance unchanged: the chamber is still well in the control of the Alliance Party of Berne. The radicals have gained a few seats. The Federal Council has decided to close the Swiss Consulate in Rhodesia. This met with the objections of a national councillor who claimed that such a decision went against the principle of integral neutrality. Indeed, he maintained that neutrality forbade Switzerland to take part in any collective gesture. The Federal Council has redefined the increasingly adopted procedure of calling on the cantons for their advice on new legislation. The time when the cantons are to be consulted in the law-making process has now been agreed. The people of Vaud have confirmed the decision of the Great Council, made two months ago, of giving equal statutes to the Catholic Church of Vaud.