

# Swiss news

Objekttyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1971)**

Heft 1607

PDF erstellt am: **19.05.2024**

## **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.

Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.

Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

## **Haftungsausschluss**

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

*mon capitaine!"* but get away with *"compris capitaine!"*, which is, of course, less obsequious and more functional. Many more changes are proposed. Recruits should be authorised to discard their uniforms during leave and wear civilian clothes. The distinction in apparel between ordinary soldiers and officers should be toned down. The changing of the guard and other inside usages should be simplified. A further proposal of the Report is to retire Army instructors at 54.

The aim of the drafters has not only been to adapt national service to the times and pave the way for a more functional basic training, it has also aimed at producing more independent men.

Many higher officers have criticised the report. It is easy to appreciate how difficult it must be for a professional or semi-professional officer with a long military experience to adjust to such radical proposals. But the case for a change was overwhelming. There was doubtless a certain beauty in the traditional vertical rapports within the Army. The clockwork of prefect order and discipline and the symbolically charged pantomime of traditional etiquette did not lack in appeal. But the newcomer to the Army ready to appreciate these things are getting rarer these days. A rookie scowls when he has to say *"à vos ordres caporal!"* to a fellow of his own age in a clear and reverential voice. He feels that he could just as well say *"O.K.!"* provided there were a sufficiently rigid disciplinary framework to ensure that the order were actually carried out. No one, not even the obstreperous young of today, are against discipline. But against unnatural rigmarole, yes. The Oswald Report is a milestone in the Army's history because it will allow ordinary boys to behave during their national service pretty well the same way as they do in civilian life. It will certainly help to upgrade the popularity of the Army and its union with the Swiss people.

(PMB)

## SWISS NEWS

### PRESIDENT FOR 1971

The Federal Assembly has elected Mr. Rudolf Gnägi, Head of the Military Department, as President of the Swiss Confederation for 1971. Mr. Gnägi became a member of the Federal Council in succession to Dr. F. T. Wahlen. He entered the State Council of Berne in 1952 and was elected to the National Council in 1953 as a representative of the Agrarian Party. He headed the Department of Transport and Communications until July 1968. He is the 20th Bernese president of the Confederation.

The Vice-President for the year will be Mr. Nelio Celio, Head of the Financial Department. He entered the Federal Council in December 1966 and

was for a time the Head of the Military Department. Mr. Gnägi is 53, and Mr. Celio 56.

(ATS)

### THE CASE OF THE BULGARIAN FAMILIES

Three Bulgarian families obtained a tourist visa from the Swiss General Consulate in Turkey. It was made plain to them that there were no possibilities for any foreign tourist of finding work in Switzerland. A few weeks after their entry into Switzerland, these Bulgarians found themselves stranded without a rappen in Geneva. They filed an application for asylum which was refused by the immigration laws. These only grant asylum to refugees who have not previously obtained political asylum elsewhere. The Bulgarians were not in that category, because they had previously obtained asylum from Turkey. They found moral and practical support with the Protestant Social Centre in Geneva, which asked Maître Payot, consultant lawyer of the League for Human Rights, to look after their case. Maître Payot sent a letter to the Department of Justice after the latter had decided to return the refugees to Turkey. This letter, although not in the form of a regular appeal, was interpreted as a request for a re-investigation of the case. Maître Payot decided at the eleventh hour to make a formal appeal against the extradition of the Bulgarians. They will be allowed to remain in Switzerland until a decision on their case is taken.

### THE KIDNAPPING OF AMBASSADOR GIOVANNI BUCHER

The British public were more concerned about the power shortages than about the fate of the Swiss ambassador in Rio on December 7th, and this is probably why it has been practically impossible to read about this affair in the British Press.

Mr. Giovanni Bucher, a sportive and courteous bachelor, was making his way towards the Swiss Embassy in Rio early on Monday morning, 7th December, when his limousine was suddenly hemmed in between two small cars. The kidnappers sprang out, armed with pistols, and ordered Mr. Bucher's chauffeur to lie down on the pavement. The ambassador's bodyguard attempted to resist but was immediately shot down. He died later in hospital.

The Brazilian police reacted quickly. It deployed 30,000 men in the Rio area and concentrated its search in the residential areas around Barra de Tujica, a luxury seaside resort situated in an exotic setting north of Rio. There they found one of the cars of the kidnappers. They located the kidnappers' hideout but could not take the risk of investigating it immediately, as this would certainly have cost the life of the Swiss Ambassador. The kidnappers thus had time to break away into the neighbouring jungle.

When this account was written, four days before Christmas, nothing was known of the exact whereabouts of Ambassador Bucher. The Brazilian authorities had received a second message written by him personally on December 17th. The letter was addressed to Mr. Max Feller, the Swiss diplomat who had been dispatched to Rio to replace Mr. Bucher. (In passing, Mr. Max Feller is known to many Swiss in London, as his career brought him to London a few years ago. He has recently been appointed to the new post of Ambassador to Luxembourg). This letter indicated that Mr. Bucher was alive and well, although beginning to feel the strain of his detention. He reiterated the kidnappers' conditions: They were ready to release their captive on the condition that a formal guarantee were given by the Brazilian government that 70 political prisoners would be freed. They also demanded official declarations from the Chilean and Algerian embassies in Brazil that these respective countries were ready to grant political asylum to the 70 prisoners. The kidnappers were ready to give the list of prisoners once these guarantees were given.

This affair is one more episode of the urban guerrilla now being waged against the Brazilian regime. The kidnappers revealed their affiliation in the tracts they left behind them on the scene of the kidnap. They belonged to the same commando group as Joaquim Ferreira Camara, revolutionary leader who was killed two months beforehand on his arrest. It is believed that the raid was organised by Carlos Lamarca, one of the last remaining major leaders of the urban guerrilla. This kidnap was the fourth in a series involving the U.S. ambassador, the Japanese Consul in Sao Paulo and the German Ambassador. All three had been returned alive in exchange for the liberation of political prisoners. The German Ambassador had been exchanged for 40 prisoners who were expatriated to Algeria.

Why choose the Swiss Ambassador? Mr. Apollonio de Carvalho, one of the Brazilian exiles who had been ejected from Switzerland for having made political statements in Geneva last November, revealed that the kidnap had been planned long in advance. There was therefore no direct link between this unfortunate Swiss incident and the choice of a Swiss ambassador. Mr. de Carvalho had been invited with a colleague by the International Commission of Jurists and the League for Human Rights in Geneva to testify on the regime of terror in Brazil. He had said in what he claimed to have been a private conversation that the hijacking of airliners was to be condoned in circumstances of last resort. A Genevese reporter had turned this into a public statement and the Federal Council, still sensitised by the Jordanian affair, had ordered their extradition. The reason advanced by Mr. de Carvalho for the choice of a Swiss ambassador was



## More branches in Continental Europe than any other British bank

Lloyds Bank Europe provides directly or through its wholly owned subsidiaries, a comprehensive domestic and international banking service in Belgium, Holland, France and Switzerland.

### Some of the services of Lloyds Bank Europe

Accepting deposits in Sterling, Eurodollars or other foreign currencies at fully competitive rates.

Issuing Negotiable Certificates of Deposit in Sterling and U.S. Dollars.

Short or medium term loans in London or on the Continent to finance expansion outside the U.K.

Discounting Foreign Currency Bills.

International Portfolio Management in Switzerland.

**HEAD OFFICE: 100 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.**

AMSTERDAM • ROTTERDAM  
THE HAGUE • GENEVA • ZURICH  
ANTWERP • BRUSSELS • PARIS  
BIARRITZ • BORDEAUX  
CALAIS • CANNES • LE HAVRE  
LILLE • NICE • ROUBAIX • ST.  
JEAN DE LUZ • MONTE CARLO

that Switzerland was the third most important investor in Brazil after the U.S. and Germany. As such, the Swiss took part in the economic exploitation of Brazil and served the purpose of imperialism.

This was not the first time that Switzerland had become involved with Brazil's political unrest. The most prominent case was the arrest and torture of the young double national Von der Weid and the subsequent attempts by the Swiss Embassy to assist him.

The Brazilian police claimed that Mr. Bucher had not taken sufficient heed of their safety recommendations. The ambassadors of America, Germany, France, Canada and Switzerland (all countries having important financial stakes in Brazil) had been advised to take special precautions. All of them except Mr. Bucher displaced themselves with two or three bodyguards, had required the escort of police cars and frequently changed their itineraries. Mr. Bucher hadn't taken the threat seriously and had contented himself with one bodyguard and a chauffeur. His chauffeur had received precise orders in the event of a kidnap, but unfortunately had received this day off on the day one actually took place. His replacement had received no directives. Instead of accelerating and slamming through the obstructing vehicle—as the order implied—he had stopped abruptly and run away.

The Federal Council reacted calmly and waited several days before issuing a communiqué. The Jordanian practice run had apparently been useful. It trusted in the utmost efforts of the Brazilian government. There was little else it could do.

### TROUBLED NEGOTIATIONS IN BERNE

An Italian delegation came to Berne to discuss the problem of Italian labour in Switzerland. Italian trade unions are particularly sensitive to the treatment generally served on seasonal workers in Switzerland and have attempted to induce the Swiss authorities to lift the status of seasonal workers to that of yearly workers and other ordinary workers. The Swiss delegation wasn't prepared to offer more than an increased contingent of 4,000 seasonal workers who would be considered as yearly workers in 1971. These concessions were far from sufficient for the Italians, whose feelings became distinctly sore at the end of a week of fruitless negotiations. Many Italian circles are angry at Switzerland for the relatively unjust treatment given to seasonal workers. These have no right to bring their families with them and are usually unsatisfactorily accommodated. Technically, 80 per cent of official seasonal workers are not really seasonal workers. They work in Switzerland for practically the whole year and only return to Italy for the holidays.

### Berne—Two new "Dancings"

Two new "Dancings" were recently opened in Berne. The "Happy Light" discotheque is in the Casino, and offers electronically-operated music and lighting effects. Six slide projectors, three film projectors, two projectors for coloured moving lights, electronic flashes and nine spots for colour changes will help the disc jockey to provide improvised and taped light and sound shows for young people. This discotheque will hold 250 people, and will be a great new attraction in Berne. The other new "Dancing" is the "Babalu"—near the main railway station — which offers room for some 450 guests. Here again great care was taken to provide the best acoustic conditions. A novelty in this context is the electronically-operated stereo installation which partly comes from the USA. New is also the system of charging entrance fee only for week-ends and only for very expensive bands. Otherwise there will be a nominal drinks charge of Sw. Frs. 1.50 to Sw. Frs. 2.—per hour.

### "Les Diablotins", International Holiday Centre, Les Diablerets

Les Diablerets is the first resort in the Vaudois Alps keeping the Ski school open throughout the year, thanks to its high Alpine ski area reaching up to 10,000 feet above sea level.

"Les Diablotins" is a most up-to-date international holiday centre for groups of young people. The establishment has 146 beds (2-4 beds per room), hot and cold water and is open throughout the year, mountaineering and mountain climbing with trained guides, ski-instructors and Youth Organisers available. Skis and boots for hire. Attractive all-inclusive arrangements.

Full information from: M. V. Grobety, director, "Les Diablotins", 1865 Les Diablerets, Switzerland.

### Lucerne—Camping Lido

The Camping Lido at Lucerne has been adapted for Winter conditions by the installation of heated shower-baths and toilets. There is a washing machine, a drier, electric pick-up points and a very comfortable lounge. Winter Campers will find plenty of opportunities for ski-ing in the neighbourhood and non-skiers will have the following attractions at their disposal: Artificial ice-rink, curling rinks, indoor swimming pool, Swiss Museum of Transport, shopping, etc.

### Swiss Motorways

The 35-mile long motorway between Winterthur and St. Gall is now completed. Its construction took seven years. The section Villeneuve—Vevey (8 miles) of the motorway "Leman" is now open to traffic in both directions. The eight-mile section Lenzburg-Neuenhof was opened to traffic in October. This is the last section but one of the Berne-Zurich motorway to be completed. It is hoped to complete the last section Neuenhof-Zurich during 1971.