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News from Switzerland

PURCHASE OF PROPERTY BY RESIDENTS ABROAD

The Federal Office for Statistics recently announced that permits issued in 1966 to residents abroad for the purchase of property in Switzerland amounted to a value of 293.2 million francs, covering an area of over 3m. square metres. There were 1450 applications granted, 176 more than in the previous year. Eighty-eight applications were rejected, the same number as in 1965. The purchase of land by an oil refinery with mainly foreign capital investments in the boundary regions of Vaud and Valais amounted to nearly 1½ m. square metres. Even more so than hitherto, the number of German individuals interested in land purchase is the highest, again mostly in Ticino and Grisons.

Of the 1450 permits, 102 alone were for the Ticino, 63 for Vaud, 44 for the Valais, 32 for the Grisons — a total of 408 Communes.

Thirty-two million francs was spent on the purchase abroad of 626,550 square metres by 345 Swiss or foreigners living in Switzerland, as well as by 21 companies. This concerned mostly houses and agricultural establishments. It is remarkable that both in Germany and France, more ground was surrendered to Swiss than nationals of those two countries took over in Switzerland.

WINTER SEASON IN THE APPENZELL REGION

More and more the people of the Appenzell Region (in north-eastern Switzerland) are becoming aware of the possibilities of promoting its winter season. For the first time special weekly all-inclusive rates are available from January 1 to April 30 in the hotels of Appenzell, Weissbad, Schwende, Bruelisau, Gonten, Jakobsbad and Urnaesch.

During the same period the visitors may obtain at a special rate a general pass valid on four funiculars and eleven chairlifts. Appenzell, the canton's capital, has a very active Swiss Skiing School which offers in addition to its daily programme courses in wedeling, tests, children's races and excursions.

SWISSAIR'S TWO NEW JUMBO JETS

Swissair, Switzerland's national airline, has decided to order two American B-747 jumbo jets for its North Atlantic run. With a crew of 19, the B-747 will be able to carry 353 passengers and 10 tons of cargo. The speed will be about 657 miles per hour. These huge planes will be able to take care of the growing traffic in fewer flights and thus prevent congestion of air routes and at airports.

INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOBILE SHOW 1968

The annual Automobile Show in Geneva this year is going to take place from March 14 to 24. It may proudly regard itself as the most complete show of road vehicles and as the most international of the automobile exhibitions—last year manufactures from 21 nations were represented. The latest passenger cars, utilitarian vehicles, building machinery and spare parts will be exhibited at more than 600 booths.

The Swiss Federal Railways are going to sell visitors to the Automobile Show return tickets within Switzerland at the price of a one-way ticket; most other European railroads are also giving special reductions to those who wish to attend the Automobile Show.

NEW INVENTION TO PREVENT WATER POLLUTION

As the water in streams, rivers and lakes is increasingly polluted by leaking oil and gasoline tanks, voices calling for safety measures are heard throughout the land. A Swiss architect has after long months of labour succeeded in developing a gadget which, although it cannot prevent leakage of oil or other liquids, starts off an alarm at its first sign.

This invention was described as "a considerable step toward the protection of our waters" by experts and other interested parties who watched a demonstration.

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