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impressive sight was the big hall with a display of all types of farm machines.

A few weeks before the opening of the Olma, a piece of the N.I. from Wangi to St. Gallen was completed and it was a great help in dealing with the large volume of traffic to the show. It was possible to drive from Schaffhausen to the show in less than one hour, a journey which usually takes about 2 hours.

A feature on the Olma this year was the finish of the first Swiss Jass competition; 30,000 Swiss, including ladies, competed for the many prizes, with the big prize being a car valued at 19,000 Swiss francs. 80 Competitors "Jasst" for the first prize in the last round at the Olma. The winner was Willi Bühlmann Ebikon, with 2427 points. In a T.V. interview he said that he plays cards only very occasionally. The organisers are so pleased with the results that they want to make it an annual event.

Well attended always are the "Metzgete", held from the end of October onwards. It is just about a must for every Swiss to attend one or more of these social events, so there is no trouble of getting rid of money here!

Fog is a big problem at this time of the year. When we have a foggy day accidents increase considerably. One day 30 cars were involved in an accident on the N.I. Lenzburg—Bern. The accident rate is very high in Switzerland and more than 1400 people get killed on Swiss roads every year, which is reflected in insurance premiums, they are very high here.

The other day I read in a Swiss newspaper about the landing of 3 flying saucers in a field in New Zealand. That was naturally big news for me here in Switzerland.

With regards,  
E.S.

## Swiss Population at the Beginning of 1969

The latest estimates of the Federal Statistical Office indicate that the total population of Switzerland (foreigners included) was 6.115 million at the beginning of the year. This means an increase of 79,000 inhabitants between the beginning of 1968 and the beginning of 1969, a smaller figure than that for the corresponding period a year before, which was 83,000. There is a distinct slowdown in the rate of population growth. Had it followed the rate found in 1963 and 1964, then today's population would have been 6.85 million.

Since 1964, Zurich has lost 7,000 inhabitants, Geneva 5,200, and Bern 600. Basle has gained 1,700 inhabitants and Lausanne 2,500. The present populations of these cities are respectively 432.2, 169.2, 169.5, 166.8, 213.2, and 128.3 thousand inhabitants.

Compared with the 1964 situation, the population of every canton except Appenzell has increased. The smallest increases

(considerably below 5%) are found in Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden, Nidwalden, Glarus, Basel-town, Schaffhausen, the two Appenzells, the Grisons and Valais. In absolute figures, the population of the Canton of Bern has seen the greatest growth, with a 71,000 population increase, then comes Zurich with 63,900, Ticino with 37,000, Aargau with 33,000 and Geneva with 32,000 new inhabitants.

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## Is Freedom to Demonstrate a Right?

Switzerland's highest judicial body, the Federal Court, will be called upon to rule whether or not demonstrations in the city of Zurich need prior police authorisation.

Two lower courts have given conflicting judgments on the point.

A district court judge in Zurich last year annulled fines imposed on four people who took part in a spontaneous demonstration involving a march to the Spanish consulate to protest against the treatment of trade unions in Spain.

The judge held that the city of Zurich does not have the right to make demonstrations subject to prior permission, otherwise the authorities would be able to restrict guaranteed liberties through their police powers.

However, this judgment, which aroused widespread interest in Switzerland, has now been overruled by the Zurich High Court, which said prior permission is needed so that the police can make preparations.

The High Court said, however, that permission should be refused only if there is a clear danger to public peace and order. But it found that the four men were guilty as originally charged.

Defence council for the four maintains that a demonstration becomes illegal only if damage to property or personal injury occurs.

Meanwhile Zurich attorney Manfred Kuhn says that, if the Federal Court upholds the Zurich High Court's judgment, he will put forward an individual initiative to get the cantonal constitution altered so that the right to demonstrate is expressly guaranteed.

Dr Kuhn says a spontaneous demonstration — such as one protesting against Soviet policies or actions — will not be possible if prior permission is needed. He maintains that an insistence on prior permission is just as incompatible with a free society as press censorship.

—Weekly Tribune, Geneva.

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- **Reminder** of the Christmas Broadcast at 8 p.m. from all National Stations on 23rd December, as advertised in last Month's issue.