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Switzerland's Nuclear Industry

The Swiss Association for Atomic Energy points out that in spite of a national market that for a long time remained non-existent, in spite too of the keen international competition and an unfavourable monetary situation, several Swiss firms have succeeded, thanks to the quality of their products, in establishing themselves on the world market for equipment for nuclear power stations. In 1973, as in previous years, Swiss industry received many orders from almost all countries with projects for nuclear power stations. Brown Boveri, with a long tradition of specialisation in the electrical sector, has taken part in several European schemes and has, in addition, received its first orders for gas removal systems. It has also continued its efforts to gain a firm footing on the American market where, at the beginning of 1974, it achieved a decisive new success with an order for turbines from the Tennessee Valley Authority valued at 660 million francs. Sulzer, for its part, is the company that possesses one of the widest ranges of products in the field of components and systems for the nuclear industry. In particular it manufactures reactor vessels, safety housings, primary circuits, pressurisers, internal parts of reactors, valves, pumps and ventilating plant, etc. Apart from its success in Europe, this firm was officially approved in 1973 as a supplier of components for American power stations by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), which sets the standards in the USA. Apart from Sulzer, only six other foreign companies have so far been officially recognised as suppliers in the United States. George Fischer has gained a leading position on the international market of cast steels for nuclear power stations. Several other Swiss firms have joined the leaders among European firms in their specialised fields: the Charmilles Engineering Works (Geneva) for fuel exchange and handling equipment, Chemap (Mannedorf) for filtering equipment, Theodor Christ (Aesch) for water processing and ion exchange systems and Metrohm (Herisau) for appliances for the measurement of the boron concentration in pressurised water reactors. K. Rutschi (Brugg) has exported a whole series of special pumps for the nuclear industry, not only to many European countries but also overseas. Swiss engineering offices specialising in the nuclear sector, at the head of which come Electro-Watt and Motor-Colombus, worked on plans for the national schemes for nuclear power stations in 1973 and also received a large number of orders from abroad. (SODT).

A Swiss Novelty — The Automatic Shower

When one realises that a shower uses on an average 15 litres of water a minute, one can easily imagine, in the present energy crisis, the saving that could be made in a public swimming pool for example if the problem of the hot water wasted by certain inconsiderate swimmers could be solved. The solution has been found by a firm at Crissier (Vaud—Switzerland) specialising in particular in the manufacture of

electronic control appliances and regulators; it has in fact designed a photo-electronic control system for showers worked by reflection. With this new control system, the water flows only when there is somebody actually under the shower; it stops automatically as soon as he leaves the cabin or moves to one side in order to soap himself. This new automatic shower device completes the wide range of products that this Swiss firm—one of the first to specialise in this field—offers in the sector of photo-electric control devices for sanitary appliances; in fact, it already manufactures electronic washbasins as well as partitions with automatic rinsing control for urinals. (SODT).

A Holy Year — Merely An Old Custom ?

As head of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Paul VI has called upon Catholics throughout the world to celebrate the year from Easter 1974 to Easter 1975 as a Holy Year. This custom goes back to the year 1300, when Pope Boniface VIII first instituted a Holy Year, which was to be celebrated thenceforward every hundred years. But before long the interval was cut down to 25 years. And in fact the last Holy Year was celebrated in 1950.

It is the Pope's wish that the current Holy Year should be a year of reconciliation. This thought is apt enough, for any consecration — and a Holy Year is in a sense a consecration or sanctification of humanity — presupposes a reconciliation with God. If the Pope now proclaims a year of reconciliation, he evidently means, therefore, that above and beyond this general sense of reconciliation with God, the goal of all of us at this time, but particularly of all Christians, should be a reconciliation among men.

If we draw attention in this and the coming numbers of this magazine to the Holy Year of the Roman Catholic Church, it is not only to promote pilgrimages as a modern form of tourism, but to ask with deeper meaning whether every journey, in the air, on land or on water, is not in the last analysis a pilgrimage, and whether every journey ought not to serve the ends of reconciliation. In this sense the objective of the Roman Catholic Holy Year, which is expressly shared and supported worldwide by the other Christians united in the Ecumenical Council, affects and involves us all.

A Holy Year — the term seems out of place and invites criticism. Or at best it awakens memories of the remote past. Even many Catholics well feel that the Pope's appeal to celebrate 1974/75 as a Holy Year is an unreasonable demand or — more probably — will simply ignore it. And it is easy to imagine, in these circumstances, what non-Catholic Christians or even non-Christians will think . . . Yet the idea of a Holy Year contains a certain essence of ancient human wisdom, which perhaps took on its most striking form in old Israel.

Like most other peoples, the Israelites had a seven-day week, the seventh day (the Sabbath) being a day of rest. This division of the days was extended by the Israelites to a corresponding division of the