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INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Swiss Achievement:

Industrial competitiveness: reports follow each other in quick succession. And very often contradict each other too, to a certain extent, except in so far as Switzerland is concerned, which appears each time among the leaders.

The Annual Report on International Competitiveness by the European Management Forum, a non-lucrative independent foundation, based in Geneva, Switzerland, establishes a rating of the industrialised countries, according to 302 criteria.

According to the sixth report published at the beginning of this year, the ranking by countries is as follows:

United States, Switzerland, Japan, West Germany. The same four countries were in the lead last year, but in a partially different order (Japan, Switzerland, United States, West Germany).

Among the main factors of competitiveness, Switzerland records only one poor result - for "Natural Resources".

However, this lack of resources forced Switzerland right from the start to make effective use of imported production materials and to base its economy to a large extent on services with a high added value.

That is why Switzerland has succeeded better than other countries in adapting to the many changes that have shaken the world economy during the last few decades.

For "Industrial Efficiency" Switzerland comes immediately after Japan. It comes first twice - for "Financial Dynamism" and "Social and Political Consensus and Stability", while its second place for "State Intervention" and third place for "Market Dynamism" also help give Switzerland its excellent final ranking.

SWISS ELEVATORS FOR CANADA'S HIGHEST SKYSCRAPER

Schindler Ltd, at Ebikon (Switzerland), has been commissioned to supply the elevators for Canada's highest skyscraper, situated in Toronto. It has 68 floors and will have 34 elevators. The contract, the biggest ever received by Schindler, is valued at some 30 million francs.

SWISS GRAPHIC ARTS DEVELOP THEIR ACTIVITIES

In the graphic arts, which has over 50,000 employees and is thus the fifth biggest industry in Switzerland, business has once more improved.

Output increased by four per cent, the degree of utilisation of capacity rose to 85.4 per cent. The increase in turnover however once again remained behind production, which proves how difficult it is today to get price increases accepted. Although the profit situation has recovered very slightly, it is still considered unsatisfactory.

The growth of activities abroad is increasing. In the medium term, it is moreover probable that rival media such as teletext and videotex will see their shares of world markets increase. Structural changes are therefore likely to extend over a fairly long period.