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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Spanish trade minister, Mr. Alberto Ullastres, has been touring Switzerland and lecturing on Spanish economic policy.

Switzerland will be represented at this year's Sydney International Trade Fair (1st to 12th August) both officially and through private industry, the Fair thus constituting the first big advertising campaign for Swiss industry in Australia. In accordance with the growing world-wide tendency to organise international trade fairs in distant markets, Swiss industrialists, too, are showing an increased interest in participating in such overseas displays of national achievements.

The consumption of meat in Switzerland, which is already very high, continues to increase. In 1960, the total consumption, including that of animals slaughtered at home, attained 715 million pounds. Thus, the annual average amount per inhabitant comes to 124 pounds, as compared with 119 pounds in 1959.

Switzerland is to look after 172 refugees suffering from physical or social handicaps or "personality disorders". 99 refugees will come from camps in Austria and 73 from camps in Italy. Some of them have spent as long as 15 years in camps because, a U.N.O. report stated, they were "unable to qualify under normal migration criteria because of physical or social handicaps".

Cantonal

Mr. Sebastien Dassi, Agriculture Minister of Dahomey, who is on an information tour of Germany and Switzerland, was greatly impressed by his visit to the State School of Agriculture at Courtelemont, in the Jura.

Elections will be held in May for the State Council and Grand Council of Neuchâtel.

Several Ticinese writers have been given awards under the Italian foundation, "Libera Stampa". The first prize, which amounted to 3,000 frs., went to Giorgio Orelli, of Bellinzona, for his book "Un Giorno della Vita".

The British Ambassador to Bern, Mr. Paul F. Grey, accompanied by his wife and the British Consul in Geneva, paid a courtesy visit to the State Council of Fribourg.

Zurich police are searching for a gang of burglars who carried out a "Rififi" raid on a local jeweller's the other week and escaped with 200 watches and jewellery worth 70,000 frs.

Three wild boars, one weighing 80 kilos and the other two 40 kilos each, were shot by a gamekeeper in the Obermaggenberg area of the Singine.

Having had one drink too many, an Algerian caused quite a stir in Zurich the other day by openly trying to assault a woman in a restaurant. He was arrested by the police and immediately expelled from the country.

Kloten airport now has a 3,700-metre-long runway. It has just been completed.

The attack on the Spanish Consulate in Geneva, which we reported in a previous issue, was apparently perpetrated by a group of anarchist terrorists.

In Fribourg it is being considered replacing the city's trams by trolleybuses.

A man suddenly attacked a young woman while she was strolling by the Rhône in Geneva. She escaped by plunging into the river and swimming to the other side, safe — but wet!

Prince Rainier and Princess Grace of Monaco and their children have been spending a quiet holiday at a chalet in Schoenried, Berner Oberland.

The trial of Marcel Helg has just opened before the criminal court of Delemont. A former cashier of the town's industrial services, Helg is accused of embezzling about 620,000 francs.

Highly recommended and "of special value" is, according to an official classification by the film department of Western Germany, the colour documentary, "Rhythm of a City — Zurich", which was produced for the Zurich Tourist Office by Switzerland's Condor

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Film Company. The film will soon be shown as a pre-feature in cinemas of Germany, Austria and other countries.

* * *

A 400-bed resort hotel of ultra-modern design is to be built at a cost of 20 million Swiss francs in the neighbourhood of Crans-sur-Sierre, one of the most popular mountain resorts in Switzerland's Canton Valais.

* * *

Congratulations to Mr. Robert Spruengli, chairman and administrator of Lindt and Spruengli chocolate factories, who has just celebrated his 75th anniversary.

(Most of the above items were received from the A.T.S. News Service.)

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LETTER FROM GENEVA

The Geneva Season keeps on being astonishingly lively. Easter holidays have scarcely marked a short break in the series of concerts.

It is only too true, however, that Genevans are very fond of running on Southern highways, during that long week-end, to meet, between Avignon and Marseilles, an earlier spring-time than what we are accustomed to here. And all the more so if they have been granted a true winter, favourable to snow and ice sports.

Ice sports have, in fact, taken on much more importance since the opening of the splendid Vernets artificial skating ring—one of the finest in Europe, according to the Ice Hockey World Championship's organizers themselves. Open for eight months each year, it has become an extraordinarily lively sport centre, thanks to both its skating rinks—indoor and outdoor—admitting tens of thousands of ice-skating lovers and future champions every season.

World and European Ice Hockey Championships and the International Motor Show were the big events of March in Geneva, a particularly eventful month. But artistic activities continued, and programmes for forthcoming weeks are still very rich.

At the Comedie, the season will end with a Karsenty Gala: "Trap for a Lonely Man", a play by Robert Thomas which will be presented by Pascale Roberts, Pierre Mondy and Jacques Morel.

As from Good Friday evening, 31st March until the end of April, the Théâtre de Poche is showing "Long Journey towards the Night", by O'Neil, while the Casino Theatre presents its annual *Revue*, signed by Ruy Blag. This last entertainment of the season before summer time will keep to the stage for many weeks. Opera will be produced at the Grand Casino by the Société Romande de Spectacles with "The Bat" by Johann Strauss, then "Rigoletto" by Verdi, as well as the "Figaro Wedding" by Mozart. At the same time, "Holiday on Ice" will display its light arabesques on ice at the skating rink during the last ten days of April.

But let us have a look at the shows announced for this period. From 11th March to 9th April, the Art and History Museum presented a noteworthy *Indian Art Exhibition*. Almost at the same time, the Young Economic Society was giving the first *Industrial Aesthetics Exhibition* at the Rath Museum, while painting lovers were discovering at the Athénée Museum the astonishing *Favre de Thierrens*, one of the most fashionable Paris painters of to-day. Special interest should be devoted to the exhibition of the works of *Aldo Patocchi*, wood engraver. This is at the Cabinet des Estampes. Finally, let us complete this short diary of events by calling to your attention an exhibition of the Fine Arts Section of the National Geneva Institute to be held at the Rath Museum, from 15th April to 7th May.