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PROMOTION OF WINTER SPORTS IN SOUTHERN SWITZERLAND

The increasing emphasis on winter sports in Swiss tourism has created substantial problems for the Southern Canton of Ticino. To thoroughly examine all questions of "development aid" in this sphere, the Tourist Office of Airolo recently invited a number of experts in the field to a two-way symposium on the problems of tourism in the mountain regions. According to the two extensive reports delivered, the importance of scientific planning of new winter resorts is still not sufficiently recognised. Thorough planning should include a sober evaluation of topography, comparison with competitive resorts, market research, and an analysis of the area's infrastructure and its actual tourist facilities. Various recent examples have shown that uniform, scientifically-based planning is more effective than individual initiative in the age of mass tourism. Investigations currently concentrated in the region of the Bedretto Valley are being carried out in conjunction with the Federal Institute for Local and National Planning of the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, which has a study group examining the topographical factors of the region. (This heretofore neglected area of Southern Switzerland has, due to its geographic location, a vast potential market of between 10 and 20 million people within a radius of 120 miles.) As part of increased inter-regional cooperation, a Joint Working Group has been formed between the Urseren Valley (Canton Uri), the Leventina (Canton Ticino) and Goms (Canton Valais).

[S.N.T.O.]

THE TOURIST IS KING — EVEN WHEN HE'S A STUDENT

There have been some notable changes in the old quarters of the Student Travel Service at the Leonhardstrasse in Zurich. The new, large sign covers much of the old façade, announcing in three languages: "Schweizerischer Studentenreisedienst — Service Suisse du Tourisme pour Etudiants — Swiss Student Travel Office". And behind this imposing front is a well organised establishment which stands ready with all manner of helpful suggestions to serve a clientele which consists for the most part of Europe-hungry youngsters from overseas. Under the motto "Something for (almost) nothing" the student travellers, most of whom fight a constant battle with failing finances, are offered inexpensive lodgings, food, excursions, sightseeing and shopping tours. Greatest headache for the busy people behind the scenes continues to be the enormous demand for Fondue parties. Nearly every day, in the basement of the Student Travel Office, visitors from every corner of the globe gather for a fragrant feast of the melted cheese delicacy. And word has got around that the SSR spares neither cheese nor chores to fulfill the wishes of its many clients.

Not to be outdone, the Zurich Tourist Office has been issuing half-price student tickets for its daily city sightseeing tours and its extended trips which include a ride up the Felsenegg by cablecar.

[S.N.T.O.]

NEW SUCCESS FOR SWISS WATCHMAKING IN INTERNATIONAL AERONAUTICS

In the face of keen Swiss, French and American competition, the Swiss firm Omega succeeded in winning the contract for the supply of timekeeping instruments for the Franco-British supersonic aircraft "Concord". This 174 foot long plane, designed to fly at speed in the neighbourhood of 1,500 m.p.h., required a watch with numerical indication of the time as well as a chronograph with a dial and hand marking seconds and numerical indication of the minutes, for timing different manoeuvres during take-off and landing. The instruments made by Omega were adopted by the Sud-Aviation company after repeated thorough testing of prototypes, mainly with regard to their resistance to vibrations, acceleration and shock, as well as the conditions of temperature, humidity and pressure to which they will be submitted in flight. In both instruments the time base consists of a high-frequency oscillator.

[S.N.T.O.]

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Switzerland

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