

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1968)

Heft: 1558

Artikel: Switzerland's medals at the Olympic Games

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-696033>

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FEDERAL MOSAIC

The deficit forecast in the federal finances for 1969 is three times as much as in 1968: 116 million francs. This is after the estimated surplus in changes in investments of 31.8m. has been deducted from the total shortage.

The net profit of the Alcohol Administration was over 89 million francs for the year 67/68. Of this, it is proposed to give the Cantons 8 francs per head of population towards the AHV (insurance for Old Age). It must be stressed that the main aim of the Administration is not to make money, but to safeguard public health. They promote the use of alcohol raw materials (fruit and potatoes, etc.) as feeding stuffs rather than for distilling purposes.

The Federal Council decided to increase the cost-of-living grant to the federal staff and personnel from 16 to 18% for 1968. Expenditure for the grant amounts to about 40 million francs, of which 14m. each will be debited to the PTT Services and the Federal Railways.

Switzerland is contributing with 700,000 francs to the programme of the UNO High Commissioner for Refugees. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan called it remarkable that the four small countries, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden contributed 15% of the total cost covered by 59 countries altogether.

At a meeting of the UNO Conference for Trade and Development, the Swiss leader of the delegation, Minister Languetin made a statement criticising the working plan of the Conference, which should be better balanced and based on a more marked political will.

At the forthcoming UNESCO General Assembly in Paris in November, the Swiss delegation will be led by Federal Councillor Tschudi and consist of Minister Barbey, Dr. E. Boerlin (President of the Swiss UNESCO Commission), Mr. F. de Ziegler (permanent Swiss representative) and Dr. C. Hummel. They will propose re-election of Minister Barbey in the Executive Council.

Switzerland will co-operate in the UNO Legal Commission, at present sitting in New York.

Federal Councillor von Moos opened and addressed the Diplomatic Conference in Locarno, at which various agreements were reached regarding protection of trade and intellectual properties.

The Swiss aircraft which has been at the disposal of the UNO Armistice Commission in the Near East, will continue to operate for them. The Political Department has also sent a cheque for 862,000 francs to the UNO Secretary-General for the action in Cyprus, bringing the total of the Swiss contribution so far up to 4.7 million.

The Australian Finance Minister McMahon was in Switzerland to discuss an extension of a Swiss loan from 1953 and to finalise a loan to Trans Australian Airways of 2 million Australian Dollars. The Mexican Finance Minister visited Switzerland to talk over financial matters. The South African Finance Minister Diederichs was also in Switzerland to discuss financial problems and the sale of gold. At the same time, South-African parliamentarians were in Switzerland, studying systems and usages.

On 1st October, the law for the protection of Swiss cultural possessions in case of armed conflicts, came into force. As a first project, the shelter for art treasures at the new Solothurn State Archives will be ready under the new law, and the *Schutzzäume* for the Municipal and University Library in Berne have been started, followed by Basle and other towns.

Federal Chancellor Huber will preside a commission for the study of the re-organisation of the Federal Administration.

The Federal Council has recommended to the Cantons and the Communes to consider favourably any applications for nationalisation by Hungarian refugees who asked for asylum 12 years ago.

The *Bundeshaus* in flames! The Berne fire brigade chose the Federal Palace as object in an elaborate fire exercise, including transport by helicopter of the "badly injured" and most realistic getting to safety of supposed "victims" of the fire.

(*Agence Télégraphique Suisse.*)

SWITZERLAND'S MEDALS AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Federal Councillor Gnaegi, Head of the Federal Military Department, has sent congratulatory telegrams to the Swiss medal winners in Mexico. The messages went to winners of the Silver Medal in Yachting (5-metre class) Louis Noverraz and his team Bernard Dunand and Marcel Stern; to the winner of the Bronze Medal in the 4 km. *Verfolgungsfahren* Xaver Kurmann, and to the winners of the Bronze Medal in rowing Denis Oswald, Hugo Waser, Peter Bolliger, Jakob Grob and cox Gottlieb Froehlich.

To this we should like to add that Marianne Gossweiler, Henri Chammartin and Gustav Fischer received a Bronze in the team evaluation, for dressage in riding. In shooting, Kurt Mueller was third in the *Dreistellungs-Wettkampf* (*Stutzer* at 400 metres).

The fourth, fifth and sixth places at the Olympics are awarded Olympic Diplomas. The oarsmen Altenburger, Gobet, Meister and Rentsch were fourth in rowing; Ruesli and Zwimpfer, in rowing, were fifth and Vogt fifth in *Stutzermatch* (shooting); Peter Jutzeler was sixth in Greco-Roman wrestling, and finally, the equestrian team in the *Prix des Nations* finished in an honourable sixth place out of fifteen.

(By courtesy A.T.S. and "Basler Nachrichten.")

FAWEM 68

FAWEM 1968, the first exhibition of machine tools and tools, which will be the biggest exhibition of its kind ever to be held in Switzerland, will take place in the premises of the famous Swiss Industries Fair in Basle, from 15th to 24th November 1968. In an exhibition area covering almost 240,000 sq. ft. some 120 exhibitors will be displaying the machine tools and tools of nearly 400 manufacturers from fifteen countries.

[O.S.E.C.]