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COMMENT

SWITZERLAND 'APRES LUI'

The rejection of the French referendum was bound to mean much more than a purely personal defeat for a wayward president. At stake was the whole 18th-century school of political thought and manœuvre that the General and the more loyal of his ministers had been impressing and irritating the world with for so long.

For Europeans the going of the General is overshadowed by the uncertainty over what will happen to his European policy. Has it retired with him to Collombey? Naturally enough, interest is centred on the immensely significant question of European integration. Naturally, too, this is the case particularly in countries like Switzerland which are suffering from the existence of a Common Market which excludes them.

While the short-list candidates for inclusion in an expanded E.E.C. have every reason for optimism, little has actually changed in the position of the Swiss. Despite all the encouraging words of the (admittedly few) local exponents of a United Europe, the Common Market would have to look so different, both economically and politically, for Switzerland to be able to join without changing its constitution and overriding nine-tenths of its electorate, that it might as well pack up and go home.

Even an association treaty does not appear to be very likely at present: certainly Switzerland has been anything but gratified at the thought of a poor-relation condition like that originally envisaged for Austria. General or no General, Switzerland's only way would seem to be a continuation of Dr. Schaffner's intelligently pragmatic step-by-step integration which avoids any

immediate clashes with constitution or voters. Such an integration obviously has its limits, but it is conceivable that these limits would be wide enough to keep the Swiss economy prosperous without membership or associate membership in the Community.

(By courtesy "Weekly Tribune", Geneva.)

DISTURBANCES IN BERNE AND KAIRO

The Greek Embassy in Berne arranged a "Spring Reception" at the Hotel Schweizerhof to commemorate the military coup on 21st April 1967. The Police took precautions against any possible **anti-Greek demonstrations** and sent a detachment each of fire brigade and municipal police. Several hundred demonstrators turned up but were unable to get through the tight police cordon. The police had to use tear gas and water when the marchers began to throw eggs and stones and even glass. Two young men were arrested when they were on the point of preparing "Molotov Cocktails". The Zurich Cantonal Councillor and Editor of the "Vorwärts", Franz Rueb, PdA (Workers' Party), was taken into custody, and demonstrators marched to the police barracks just before midnight to demand his release. A number of guests who tried to get to the Reception, were molested by demonstrators, and clothes were torn. An Ambassador ran to a near-by restaurant for safety, and the demonstrators broke a window of that inn. Police cameras were damaged, but managed to record pictures of some more militant demonstrators. Of the 350 guests, only about one-third got through, and the Greek Embassy protested to the Municipal Council.

In Zurich, a meeting was organised at the "Schauspielhaus" as part of a "Week in aid of a Free Greece". A number of political personalities took part.

* * *

On 1st May, some 25 students (Palestinians, Syrians, Jordanians) got past the head porter of the **Swiss Embassy in Kairo**. The Embassy immediately informed the Egyptian Government and the Police, and after a couple of hours, security officers persuaded the students to leave. The demonstrators declared that they had arranged the "sit-in" in order to protest against the detention of the Arab attackers on the "El Al" aircraft at Kloten in February. As we reported earlier, the Arabs were refused bail, whilst the Israeli security man who shot one of the attackers, had been granted bail. The Swiss Ambassador praised the quick action by the Egyptian Police, but at the same time asked for increased police protection for the Embassy premises.

In Switzerland, the two Arab men and one woman held in custody went

on a second hunger strike out of protest against what their defence calls *Rechtsungleichheit*, inequality in law. The authorities pointed out once more that killing in self-defence was in no way comparable to a planned attack on an aircraft. One of the most resolute protests against the refusal to grant bail, came from the so-called Palestine Society whose headquarters are apparently in Zurich, but which hides its identity behind a post box address. They have just issued the first copy of a pro-Arab paper "Palestine".

(A.T.S.)

TOP GRADE PLANETARIUM

With the extension of the Swiss Transport Museum, the largest of its kind in Europe, our country is now also obtaining the first large planetarium.

The Planetarium, constructed by the Carl-Zeiss Company in Oberkochen (West Germany) is in no way an observatory but rather a giant projection apparatus which produces an artificial sky, a sky which we can experiment. On the inside surface of an 18 metres' diameter hemispherical dome, a replica of the sky can be projected by means of a complex optical system, complete with thousands of stars, sun, moon, milky way and with the realistic depth and clarity as can only normally be experienced on a clear winter's night. At the centre of the dome stands the projection unit, practically 5 metres high and weighing 2½ tons. Visitors — some 300 people can be accommodated — sit in comfortable chairs inside the dome. Before the demonstration begins all lights are extinguished and the projector switched on to display the stars and the entire firmament in all its majesty on the side of the dome.

The real importance of the Planetarium does not only lie in the fascinating reproduction of the silent star-filled heaven but also in the possibility by the thousand-fold time shrinkage of making the movements of planets and constellations visible which are otherwise scarcely apparent owing to the vast distances involved, e.g. the daily rotation of the earth, the changing of the seasons and the orbits of the planets and moon. Technicians have been busy for weeks assembling the 30,000 components which make up the Planetarium together with its numerous auxiliary equipment for illustrating items of topical interest like satellite paths, space flights, etc. The "Longines" Planetarium, named after the world-famous watch company who made a generous donation to the project, is to be opened on 1st July, exactly 10 years since the Transport Museum was opened. With this most up-to-date Planetarium in Europe our country will have available an aid to study of particular importance today and whose educational value, above all for the coming generation, cannot be rated too highly.