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The Swiss Observer

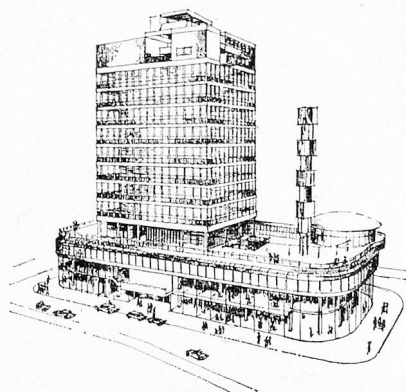
FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Vol. 55 No. 1572

FRIDAY, 27th JUNE 1969

HOW FAR DO WE STILL HAVE TO GO?



SWISS CENTRE
LONDON

By now the Swiss Centre Building between Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus has become a familiar sight to regular passers-by and a favourite meeting place for the Swiss in London. With just a little pride do we register praise. We are gratified that the undertaking should be such a success. To have a Swiss stronghold in the very heart of London is of no mean significance, and many aspects of Swiss life are portrayed to as near perfection as is possible in a foreign country. Four restaurants, a variety of shops, offices, Swiss Bank Corporation, Swiss National Tourist Office and Swissair showrooms, a well-planned office block, but, and it is a big but, *Swiss culture is still absent*. One part of the building is reserved for cultural and social purposes and will serve in particular the needs of the Swiss community.

Plans are ready, but not enough money is available to finish the building and to complete interior decorations and furnishings.

Early in the year, the Swiss Ambassador, Monsieur R. Keller, made an appeal to Swiss living in this country, and the response has been fairly good, although it is true to say that the efforts made by the less well-to-do section of the community have been greater on the whole than amongst the more affluent compatriots. But there is still time, and we hope that, whether you have received the Ambassador's appeal or not, you will send a donation to the Swiss Embassy in London (77 Gloucester Place, W.1).

The Swiss Government have made considerable promises to subsidise the venture and are now to study how to finance the whole scheme further. A number of business firms in Switzerland, as well as semi-governmental organisations like the "Pro Helvetia" Foundation and the Swiss National Tourist Office have promised support. Swiss Societies in London have earmarked handsome sums for the purpose.

The Swiss Societies will be given an opportunity of having meetings at the Centre, once the Forum is completed, and there will be the Colony Room at the disposal of the Colony every day. But the main purpose will be to have a platform for Swiss culture, a hall with seating capacity up to 350 people, in which concerts, lectures, film shows and exhibitions can be organised.

In order to run the Forum economically, commercial letting (though not of the Colony Room) is envisaged for conferences, etc. Legally, the Forum will be constituted as a Foundation registered in Switzerland, and the Confederation will be represented on its Council.

Only once the Forum exists, will the Swiss Centre be complete as a showcase for Switzerland. Many are the men and women who have worked hard for a great many years to realise this aim, and also to create a focal point of great value to the Swiss community, a scheme which will benefit not only our generation, but those who will be here after us.

MM

A GREAT SUCCESS

The 4th Pro Aqua exhibition and the congress meetings held in connection with it from 29th May to 4th June in Basle were characterised by good business transactions, lectures and meetings of a very high standard and by an echo resounding far beyond the general public interest.

The 291 exhibitors representing goods from thirty different countries, presented an entire series of themes covering water, air and waste. The comprehensiveness of this exhibition made it possible for more than 22,000 visitors from all countries in Western and Eastern Europe, together with those from North and South America, Africa, Asia and Australia to be given an up-to-date presentation of the possibilities now available for solving the many problems posed by pollution.

During the international meetings and the 4th world congress of the international work group for waste research (IAM) both of which took place under the chairmanship of Prof. Dr. Otto Jaag, Zurich, quite a number of excursions took place. Something like 1,200 participants from Europe and overseas took part. At the Pro Aqua congress, fifteen different speakers took up the themes of waste water and sewage purification and water circulation plant in industry, air purification in industry, the provision of pure water supplies and the disposal of waste water in individual industrial group. At the IAM congress there were three main introductory lectures dealing with international co-operation in the field of waste removal, the tasks of the state and communities in connection with the maintenance of pure living space and the results of the experiences of waste removal in the United States. These were followed by six work groups which discussed specific problems connected with the removal and utilisation of domestic and industrial waste material and sludge.

On the basis of an enquiry made amongst the exhibitors it was decided to hold the 5th Pro Aqua from 8th to 12th June 1971, after which the event will be continued in periods of three yearly intervals. The business success of this year's trade exhibition is confirmed by the fact that the majority of the exhibitors have already lodged their applications provisionally for Pro Aqua 71.