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THE SEPARATIST "ALTERNATIVE"

It is a well known fact that the Separatists have refused to credit the "four wise men Commission" with the right to enquire into their plight, let alone to formulate solutions, because they believe that the Commission was hired by the "imperialistic" Canton of Berne. What they now want is a "truly" mediative commission to start the work of the four wise men again. Their seven points, as presented by their outspoken leaders (Messrs. Roland Béguin, Gérmain Donzé, Roger Schaffter and Jean Wilhelm) in a press conference are as follows: Max Petitpierre, former president of the Confederation and head of the "four wise men" is deemed worthy to lead this new commission of their design; the other members of the commission will not be Bernese; they will be six in number, three from German-speaking Switzerland, two from Romandie and one Ticinese, all will have to be accepted by the Separatist Movement; the commission will be thoroughly independent from both Bernese and Federal authorities; the first object of the negotiations which it will have to mediate will be the ways and means by which the Jurassians will reach self-determination; the unilateral Bernese plan for the Jura (i.e. going through with the recommendations of the four wise men and calling the people to vote on the principle of a Jurassian statute of autonomy next May) will be suspended; the preliminaries to the creation of the new commission will have to be accomplished by the end of next March.

One may gather from these Jurassian desires that the Separatists are still ready to talk, but remain adamant in their basic attitude. The rift between Berne and the Jurassian Movement has by no means been getting narrower.

(ATS)

RENEWED DEBATE ON THE FLORIDA AFFAIR

Some two months ago, the tapping of the telephone conversation of a national councillor trying to convey classified information on the "Florida" defence system to a third party caused some ruffle in Parliament. The affair was assessed again in the National Council. It was conceded by the Government that members of Parliament (i.e. of the National Council and the Council of States) should have been better informed on a specialised but nationally vital question as "Florida". If Parliament was to do its job correctly, then it should not be hidden important information at the simple convenience of military authorities. The idea of an ombudsman, a kind of informative intermediary between Parliament and the specialised departments of the state-machinery, was mentioned as a new possibility. He would be entitled to hear private complaints on classified subjects by parliamentarians. The

question of knowing whether the parliamentary immunity of the national council involved in the "Florida" affair had been flouted was not solved. The Council agreed that the notion of parliamentary immunity had to be refined, at least, in relation to the investigatory powers of Parliament. The military authorities that had conducted the enquiry in the "Florida" affair (and tapped the national councillor's telephone conversations) had been in the right: in the particular case, military code had to be given precedence over civil legislation. If telephone-tapping was to be banned, then this was to be the object of a debate in Parliament.

(ATS)

JAPANESE CAMERAMEN AND THE SWISS ARMY

The Japanese Broadcasting Corporation has sent three of its cameramen to Switzerland to produce a half-hour feature on the Swiss Army. The film they will shoot will purport to show how a citizen can also be a soldier and illustrate the relations of the Army with the civilian population. The first day of filming took the Japanese TV-men to a typical Swiss manifestation: the compulsory shooting. On their second day, they visited a grenadier in the Canton of Schwyz and recorded, for the benefit of the millions of their compatriots, how he took his gun and haversack from the cupboard, put on his uniform and walked away to his repetition course. The following days, they studied further aspects of Swiss defence, visiting an armaments factory and interviewing a federal councillor.

(ATS)

THE SWISS NAVY

The Swiss merchant navy counted 31 ships grossing 285,333 tons at the end of 1968. Due to the sale of two ageing vessels during the year, the tonnage had been reduced by 12,000 tons. Improvements on another ship had meant an increase of 2,000 tons in the overall tonnage. Further improvements will have increased the gross tonnage of the Swiss Navy by 16,000 tons during 1969. The average age of the fleet is over 11 years. It will be renewed at an accelerated pace in order to keep abreast of the tendency of world shipping.

TOURIST NEWS (SNTO)

Swiss Alpine/Swiss Lakes & Mountain Tours

The popular all-inclusive coach tours organized by the Swiss Post Office will again be repeated next Summer.

The Swiss Alpine Tour will start from Zurich and Geneva and cover the following route:

Zurich — Rapperswil — Wildhaus — Vaduz — Chur — Julier — St. Moritz — Lugano — Gotthard —

Rhone glacier — Interlaken — Grindelwald — Spiez — Gruyeres — Lausanne — Geneva — Bern — Lucerne — Zurich and last 7 days.

The Swiss Lakes and Mountains Tour will again start in Zurich and cover the following route:

Brunnen — Andermatt — Rhone glacier — Interlaken — Spiez — Gruyeres — Montreux — Lausanne — Geneva — Berne — Lucerne — Pilatus — Zurich and last 4 days.

Full particulars are obtainable from the Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street, London, W1V 3HG.

Winterthur — Art Museum

From January 18 to March 8 the dominating trends will be cubism, futurism and orphism which will be exhibited as expressed by Swiss artists.

Hoch-Ybrig—the ski-ing area

Plans for the creation of a new Sports and Holiday Centre in Central Switzerland are well under way.

For the Winter Season 1969/70 the following facilities are already available:

- (a) A new 3 mile long road from Unteriberg to Weglossen, the cable car station.
- (b) Two covered car parks for approximately 1,000 cars.
- (c) Additional parking space for 60 cars.
- (d) Cable way Seebli with cabins holding 125 persons (open from 1st February, 1970).
- (e) Three skilifts.
- (f) Several restaurants and tea shelters.
- (g) Mechanical preparation of runs.

Future development will include: Two cable ways, one gondola cable way, 5 skilifts and one chairlift, hotels indoor swimming pool etc.

Weglossen is reached by road from Zurich in one hour or by rail and Postal Coach in one hour and forty minutes.

Hotels in the Hoch-Ybrig area are available in Einsiedeln, Unteriberg and Oberiberg.

Bernina Pass open in Winter

The Bernina Pass Road will again be kept open this winter for motorized traffic by the communities of Poschiavo and Brusio. Several critical spots on this road were improved last summer.

New Zurich Airport Hilton to be opened in May 1970

The foundations for the first Hilton hotel in Switzerland, the "Zurich Airport Hilton" were laid last March in Glattbrugg-Opfikon, near the international airport Zurich-Kloten.

The Zurich Airport Hilton will be located on a 3.7 acre site at the intersection of the airport expressway and the Zurich-Stuttgart motorway, with direct access to the Swiss Autobahn network. Only 15 minutes by car from the

business and shopping district of Zurich and 30 minutes from the industrial centres Winterthur and Baden the Zurich Airport Hilton will serve the increasing air passenger traffic in Zurich. Because of the elevation on the wooded Hohenbühl in Glattbrugg-Opfikon, the hotel will enjoy a panoramic view of the airport and the lovely farming country to the west as well as the northern section of the picturesque city of Zurich.

The hotel, which will be fully air-conditioned, will consist of a two-storey central building interconnected with a four-storey guest room wing containing 175 rooms. The plans provide for the later construction of an additional guest room wing that will bring up the total capacity to 300 rooms with 600 beds. All guest rooms will be equipped with bath, radio, television outlet and direct dial telephone. There will, furthermore, be some apartments and conference-suites. The entrance hall of the central building will lead into the lobby with a fireplace and to the reception area. The same floor will house a restaurant (138 seats), a bar with cocktail lounge (47 seats), a coffee shop (54 seats) as well as private dining and convention rooms with a capacity up to 200 persons. On the lower floor, there will be a heated covered swimming pool and snack bar with access to the landscaped grounds.

The architect is Walter R. Hunziker of Zurich, working in collaboration with Hilton International's department of architecture and interior design. Swiss-born Hans Weishaupt will take over the management of the hotel. Completion of the first construction phase will be next spring and the opening is estimated for May 1970.

With the Zurich Airport Hilton, Hilton International will have ten hotels under construction, in addition to its 43 hotels already in operation around the world.

Numismatic rarities at Fribourg

Visitors to the beautiful old city of Fribourg who also pay a visit to its Museum of Art and History will find

a most impressive collection of works of art and antiquities in the more than twenty exhibition rooms of the three main floors of the old patrician home "Hotel Ratze" dating back to the 16th century. The newly rebuilt coin room is on the building's highest floor. Numismatic fans can admire coins struck in Fribourg in an unusual collection of great artistic beauty. In addition to coins of the historic state there are also remarkable cantonal coins of the first half of the 19th century issued prior to the federal mint (after 1850). Further groups in the collection consist of excavated coins dating back to ancient times and the middle ages, (first of all from Pontalban, Sevaz, Aumont, Ueberstorf), of ancient Roman coins of all kinds as well as of cantonal and federal coins and foreign ones.

Fabulous creatures dancing on the Rhine in Basle

On January 20 it is worth while to witness the unique custom of the "Bird Griffin". Although it breathes the spirit of Basle, it belongs to the right bank of the river, a section of the city called Kleinbasel which is proud of this tradition. The three "Signs of Honour of Kleinbasel" present themselves with almost mythological splendour. They are the bearers of the coat of arms of Kleinbasel's oldest guilds, called "Zur Haren" ("The Herring"), "Zum Rebhaus" ("The Wine House") and "Zum Greifen" ("The Griffin"). They appear on this occasion in supernatural dimensions as "The Wild Man" with an uprooted fir tree, as an equally fierce "Lion" and as the "Bird Griffin" with a metallic bird's mask. The festival starts before lunchtime as "The Wild Man" takes a trip on the Rhine and later is welcomed by the two other figures after a proper twirling of drums and cracking of mortars. On the middle one of the Rhine Bridges and in the roads and streets of Kleinbasel these three powerful figures perform their characteristic dances to the special rhythm of drums, accompanied by people soliciting alms.

Geneva—Artists of our time

From January 9 to 18, 1970, paintings are exhibited in Geneva which were entered in the competition for the "Prix Calame" for landscape painting. At the "Salle Crosnier" of the "Athenee" one can watch how contemporary painters of Geneva deal with scenic subjects. The competition honours the memory of one of Geneva's most outstanding artists of the 19th century whose monument, like that of his contemporary, Francois Diday, has been placed at the Jardin Anglais at the lake. Alexandre Calame who lived from 1810 to 1864 described with enthusiasm the scenic world of the Bernese Oberland. He used to exhibit regularly in Paris and soon achieved international fame. His paintings in no small measure contributed toward the appreciation by distinguished tourists of the Bernese Oberland and Lake Lucerne. The Geneva school of painting of the 19th century was of extraordinary importance and young Ferdinand Hodler from the region of Berne could well be proud that he was awarded the Prix Calame for a painting of a forest in 1876 when he was only 23 years old.

Zermatt—English Church Centenary

The English Church at Zermatt will celebrate its centenary in 1970. This is one of the oldest and most famous English churches in Europe; it is known as the "Parish Church of the Alpine Club" and is beloved by climbers in Europe and America.

An appeal is to be launched to raise money to provide, if possible, a flat for holiday chaplains. Centenary celebrations are being arranged; the Centenary Service will take place on August 9th, 1970. The Bishop of Leicester, who has looked after the church during August for the last twenty-five years and is a member of the Alpine Club, will be in charge. Enquiries should be addressed to: The Commonwealth and Continental Church Society, 7 York Buildings, Adelphi, London, W.C.2.

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