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Switzerland has no film industry: no studios and no big companies. Nearly all the films which are produced on her soil are the work of loners with 16mm cameras, of amateurs with strong artistic ambitions. For these reasons most of the films presented were "shorts", with a few exceptions. The best film presented at the exhibition, "Charles mort ou vif" by the Genevese Alain Tanner was one of these exceptions. The film had obtained great success at the Cannes and Locarno film festivals but had been rejected by every cinema in Switzerland. It was actually showing very successfully in Paris.

The open discussions at the festival dwelt at length on the problems of film distribution in Switzerland. There could be no lasting Swiss cinema if home theatres were not ready to present films produced by Swiss cineasts. At the moment, cinema owners were very reluctant to show anything made at home.

Among the films shown, those most noted were "Sad-is-fiction", a "platonical portrait" of the Zurich painter Alex Sadkowsky by F. M. Murer (the film was praised by the *Basler Nachrichten* but knocked down by the *Journal de Genvève*); "Krawall", a documentary on the fight between youth and police in Zurich in 1968 by Jürg Hassler; "Fano Hill" by Xavier Koller, depicting a game which degenerates into a fight and then in murder; "La Bataillière" by Frédéric Gonzeth, a film on the recalling of the past inspired by the French producer Alain Resnais; "Die Landschaftsgärtner" by Kurt Gloon, a study of the hard existence of the peasants in the higher valleys of Switzerland; "la Pomme", by Michel Sutter, the story of a wife who goes to Geneva for a few days to meet her first lover only to find that he has become another man and that it is no longer possible to re-experience her former feelings.

About two-thirds of the films came from German-speaking Switzerland. Critics were unanimous in discovering an encouraging upsurge in artistic creativity during these four days at Solothurn.

CANTONAL

Rent problems in Lausanne

The tenants living in the buildings of Lausanne erected with public aid had been notified of rent increases of 15% at the turn of the year. The cantonal office for housing has subsequently declared that the house-owners' demand was void because the law exempted flats created with public money from rent increases. Tenants of another kind of tenement (covered by special agreement between the Commune of Lausanne and the house-owners), were officially allowed to reject the increased rent demands of their landlords.

A new recuperation campaign in Zurich

The Swiss spend 10% of their income on clothing. They usually hesitate to throw their used garments away since these could be profitably used by industry or by less prosperous people. The association of textile industries has launched a campaign to solve this problem. In a first action, teams of boy scouts and Catholic youths have managed to collect 300 tons of used clothes during two afternoons in Zurich last November. Similar actions will continue. 10 centimes will be paid for each kilogramme of old clothing collected. This money will go to the charities and welfare associations involved in the "harvest". The hundreds of tons of clothing thus collected will be sorted out and partially used by various industries, and, if they are still usable, sent off to third world countries. There will thus be a centralised depot of usable clothes for the benefit of those in need in Switzerland and abroad.

ANGLO-SWISS

The 10th Rose of Montreux contest will be held in April. This is a yearly variety-show competition in which the BBC came second last year with "Marty". This year it is entering a special edition of the "Morecambe and Wise Show" (which, needless to say, gives the Corporation pretty good chances). ITV is entering an all-comedy programme for the first time and has chosen "The Benny Hill Show" by Thames Television.

* * *

After a number of hotel registers had been examined in the Valais, it was discovered that Winston Churchill had stayed in the Canton on more than one occasion during his youth. The illustrious statesman had even accomplished some difficult ascents, some of which were above 4,000 metres. All doubts on this score were dispelled when a proof of Churchill's alpine exploits was found in the records of a mountain guide, the late John Aufdenblatten from Zermatt, which mentions a 4,500-metre climb to the summit of Mount Rosa in 1893 and holds Churchill's signature. The future statesman was only 19 at the time.

(ATS)

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We learnt from the "Palette" section of the *Basler Nachrichten* that 200,000 people disappeared every year in Great Britain. Please draw the necessary personal conclusions. . . .

RECENT DEATHS

Bernard Barbey, 69, in a car accident in Paris. He was a well-known literary figure and has lived in Paris since 1923. His works include "Le coeur gros", "La maison d'illusion" and "Chevaux abandonnés sur le champ de bataille", a novel which earned him the literary prize of the City of Paris in 1951.

During the war he was stationed in the General Staff, first working under the direct orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Masson, then succeeding to the future divisionary Colonel Gonard as head of General Guisan's personal staff. He related his friendship with Guisan and his war-time experiences in a diary published under the title of "P.C. du Général".

Carl Kling-Bowald, 71, in Basle. Son of the owner of the first photography-shop of Basle, Carl King was well known for his portrait and theatre photography.

Ferdinand Scherrer, 70, former director of the primary and secondary school of Basle. A well-known local personality of Basle.

Hans Kneubühler, 76, former director of the *Kaufm. Berufsschule* in Thun. He had been the head teacher of that school uninterruptedly from 1920 to 1965 and had been a prominent member of the Swiss Mercantile Society.

René Ruchti, 73, former manager of watch factories in La Chaux de Fonds and of the balance-wheel factories of La Sagne. He was a well-known personality of the Neuchatel Jura and was involved in the promotion of sports, being a founder-member of the "Club 44".

Edouard Lagnaz, 79, at Prilly. He had been sub-manager of the Lausanne branch of the Swiss Bank Corporation up to 1954, president of the liberal party, of the "Romanel circle", member of the communal council of Prilly and judge in the Lausanne circuit until 1960.

Prof. Frederic Kohler, 75, teacher in one of Lausanne's language institutes. He had lived in America for a long while and had presided the French Circle for Arts and Literature in Los Angeles.

Prof. William Boven, former dean of the medical faculty and rector of the University of Lausanne, at 83. His writings include such titles as "Anxiety", "Adam and Eve and the problem of the sexes", "The Science of Character" and an "Essay on the psychology of a hero: Major Davel".

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FOREIGN WORKERS

The Italian daily "La Stampa" devoted a full page to the problems of Italian workers employed in Switzerland. The article reproduced the opinions of a panel of Swiss civil servants and politicians involved with the Italian question, including James Schwarzenbach, launcher of the anti-foreigner initiative. The latter reaffirmed the essentials of his plan, which consisted in reducing the number of foreign workers in Switzerland by a third. Another official expounded on the efforts made by the Federal Council to stabilise the imported population. According to "La Stampa", the overall majority of Swiss citizens reject the Schwarzenbach thesis but his action has revived a distinctly anti-foreign attitude. The Swiss fully acknowledged the contributions made by Italians to their economy, the paper said, and it was time for them to draw a balance sheet and re-examine their consciences.

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James Schwarzenbach has complained to the Federal Chancery that the wording of the law which he proposes to submit to the people through referendum very shortly was badly translated from German into French. The Paris section of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique had noted a number of errors and diverging nuances in the French version. For one, "Ueberfremdung" was not translated by "Surpeuplement". Schwarzenbach's claim was rejected on the ground that the translators had used a commonly-accepted French terminology, but the Chancery left any eventual alteration of the French text to the discretion of Parliament.

ECONOMY

Some company results

Chemical companies are reporting very encouraging results in 1969. Ciba has increased its turnover by about 15%. Sandoz sold for 2.5 billion francs' worth of chemicals, an increase of 13.2%. The Geigy Group made a turnover of 3.16 billion francs, about 16% more than the achievements of the previous year. Lonza had also been increasing its business by about 15% and stepping up its penetration into America. Landis und Gyr, in Zug, have sold for 460.2 million francs worth of manufactured goods as compared with 388.3 million in 1968. The sales of the "Migros" chain of supermarkets has risen by 12.2% to almost three billion francs. With the other interests (such as banking and petrol) the turnover added up to 3.4 billion francs.

Computer-initiates in tremendous demand

The Data Logic Consultancy Group (whose parent company is Business Management Promotions Ltd.) have opened a new company, called Data Logic S.A., in Lausanne. There is an immense demand for programmers, systems analysts and other specialists of the arcane science of operations research. According to a press release by the company, "Switzerland is the best potential market in Europe for data processing consultancy and support services. It ranks fifth amongst European countries in terms of computer installations, and it is first in terms of the ratio of computers per head of population. At the same time, most Swiss computer installations are desperately short of trained manpower to undertake systems analysis and programming tasks, and are painfully aware of the limitations this imposes on the scope of their activities . . . We are going to Switzerland at the best possible time. The demand there for data processing is tremendous, but so far the established software houses have a pretty poor reputation for the most part. The majority are following the old pattern of presenting trainee programmers as fully fledged consultants. It's hardly surprising that the average Swiss data processing manager has little confidence in them".

A marine monster

Sulzer's of Winterthur have delivered the most powerful marine diesel engine ever built to a Norwegian shipyard. It weighs 1,180 tons, is 21 metres long, 11.7 metres high and 4.5 metres wide. The crankshaft alone weighs 200 tons and is 18.5 metres long. The pistons have a bore of 105 cm. and together achieve a power of 48,000 h.p.

The debate on sugar

Swiss agriculture having been producing too much milk, the Government (in particular Mr. Schaffner) decided to throttle this over-production by increasing taxation on milk and redirecting agriculture towards other cultures such as sugar-beet. The Federal Council decreed over a year ago that the arable land devoted to beet production should be raised from 9,000 to 10,000 hectares, thus increasing the beet harvest from 430,000 to 450,000 tons and lead to a production of 62,000 tons of refined sugar by our two home refineries. All political parties except the Independent Alliance (or the "Migros Party") agreed on the scheme. Migros claimed that, through this switch to a loss-making culture such as sugar-beet, the tax-payers and consumers were made to spend more than what benefits the farmers would reap and launched an initiative to counter the law. World price of refined sugar is 40 fr for 100 kg whereas the break-even price in EEC countries is 110 fr for the same weight. This is why beet production has to be heavily subsidised in Common Market countries and, because they have a surplus of sugar, they dump it into Switzerland (which can only produce 20% of its requirements) at the world price. In spite of heavy taxation on sugar imports the price of imported sugar is still too low for home production to be profitable. Swiss beet farmers must be heavily subsidised, so must the country's two refineries, who actually get the beet from the farmers at a higher price than that fetched by sugar on the home market. However, the situation was considered unavoidable by the masters of our agriculture who have agreed to spend more federal money on more loss-making sugar-beet fields (knowing that the world price of sugar can hardly fall any lower) and let the consumer pay a litle more for his sugar to cover the losses of Swiss refineries, which had exhausted the subsidies the Government was prepared to allocate them.

In spite of strong propaganda by the Migros Party and its appeal to the parsimonious instincts of consumers, 43% of voters turned up to give the go-ahead to the governmental scheme by a small majority.

(ATS)

Distribution of jobs in the Federal Council

The Federal Council, as everybody knows, is a body of seven "federal councillors" elected by Parliament (i.e. the National Council and the Council of States) to form the executive of the nation. They take turns to become President of the Confederation. Last year it was Mr. Von Moos, this year it's Mr. Tschudi. Besides the important role of submitting new legislation to Parliament, each federal councillor is responsible for a Federal Department (rather the same thing as a British ministry, but perhaps more important still).

There were no surprises in this year's attribution of Departments. Mr. Spuehler, former head of the Political Department, and Mr. Schaffner, former head of the Department of Public Economy have respectively been succeeded by Mr. Pierre Graber and Mr. Ernst Brugger. The other departments are held by the same men as before and each have a deputy to take over (or present the dossiers to Parliament) if they are ill or absent. The list runs as follows, with the deputies in brackets: Political Department, Graber (Celio); Department of Home Affairs, Tschudi (Von Moos); Department of Justice and Police, Von Moos (Gnaegi); Military Department, Gnaegi (Bonvin); Financial and Excise Department, Celio (Tschudi); Department of Public Economy, Brugger (Graber); Department of Transports and Communications, Bonvin (Brugger).

(ATS)

THE FIRST JUMBO JET LANDS IN SWITZERLAND

Police had difficulty in containing the crowd that converged on Kloten Airport to watch the flying monster, the Boeing 747, land for the first time on a Swiss runway. It wasn't a regular flight, just a training bout for the 18 crewmembers (seven for piloting, 11 for catering) of the TWA aircraft.

Everybody was very keen to find out what kind of noise the machine would make on take-off. Apparently, the Boeing 747 was less noisy than its far smaller brethren. Each machine can carry 362 passengers, weighs 308 tons fully loaded and has a height of 19.32 metres, that is, the height of a six-storey building. Each jumbo jet that lands in Zurich means 1,930 francs of duty to be paid by the airline to Zurich Airport, twice the amount paid for the landing-duty of a Boeing 707.

(ATS)

A NEW SPY STORY

The 32nd case of spying in Switzerland by a Communist power since the war, and apparently one of the most serious, has recently been uncovered. A civil servant in the immigration and residency office of Lausanne was found guilty of disclosing to the Russians all the ways an alien can come into Switzerland and settle there without any trouble from the police. His professional position was naturally very helpful and allowed him, in the process, to help the Russians to produce false residents' documents for the benefit of the agents they might want to establish in Switzerland. Marcel But-

tex was working under the direct orders of the first and second secretary of the Russian Embassy in Berne. The two diplomats have been asked to leave the country. It appears that Buttex, a confirmed Communist, had been rather parcimoniously paid by his Russian "employers".

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MISCELLANEOUS

An inventor from Pully, Mr. Ernest Burdet, has spent forty years to discover a machine which helps the music student to read his score more rapidly and play it in time. He was severely condemned by the music teachers' association in its official paper and has sued the association for damages.

(*ATS*)

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A Zurich food company has developed spaghettis three times richer in protein but 50% poorer in glucids than the usual makes. The new spaghettis will be ideal for women keen on holding their line and will be harmless to people suffering from diabetes. The professor who presented the new product in a press conference added the useful indication that the minimal daily protein ration was of 40 grammes a day and that the optimal ration corresponded to one gramme per kg. of bodyweight.

* * *

The first lorry and utility vehicle exhibition to take place in Geneva also included an interesting review of the Swiss motorcar "industry". With the co-operation of the transport museum in Lucern and private collectors it was possible to assemble the best representatives of such prestigious firms as Egg, Saurer, Berna, Dufaux and Ajax.

THE JURA

The Jura problem is far from settled. On March 1st, the whole of the Canton of Berne will be given the opportunity of expressing its stand on the proposals put forward by the "four wise men" last May. They will have to vote for-or-against the principle of an "autonomy statute" for the Jura.

The "Groupe Bélier", which is the spearhead of the separatist movement has elected a new leader, a former *Poly* student of 30 called Pierre Grimm. It recommends a vote of "yes" to the autonomy statute, since this would be a first step towards annihalating the Bernese domination of the Jura, but it plans to press on its "struggle for liberation" in 1970.

The Bernese Parliament has debated the possibility of instituting an "ombudsman" in the Canton during its three-week session in January and February. This ombudsman would act as an administrative intermediary and could eventually have a role to play in the settling of the Jura question.

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