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# The Swiss Observer

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## Universal problems

Swiss literature is faced today with a number of general problems. First, like everywhere else, writers are finding out new literary forms and new means of expression. The clash between the innovators and the conservative literary establishment is particularly strong in German-speaking Switzerland. Then there is the problem of "Swisshood" and a painful linguistic duality. Should "Swisshood" and Swiss values be maintained at all costs? May they be sacrificed in the interest of a live and universal literature? Swiss authors are deeply separated on this issue. The most important of them all, Max Frisch, clearly acknowledges his nationality and what he owes to his country but points out that he cannot be a "Swiss" writer. Freedom and creative liberty can only be safeguarded by slighting some traditionally Swiss conceptions. But, even though the cultural connotation of the adjective "Swiss" must take a bad mauling, there is no doubt that, as far as its geographical meaning is concerned, "Swiss" has never stood for a more flowering literary life as today.

(PMB)

## COMMENT

### THE END OF THE "RHONE AU RHIN" DREAM?

The idea of a waterway linking the Rhone to the Rhine is very dear to the hearts of many *Romands*. It is a recurring theme, as old as the idea of a cross-Channel tunnel, and, according to the reminiscences of the elder members of my Neuchatel family, was very topical in the 1900s already. The aim was not just a canal crossing through Switzerland, but the possibility of cruis-

ing from Basle to Geneva, from Geneva to Marseilles in a steamboat. The idea was latent in many of the important projects of the past decades. The freight station of La Praille, in Geneva, was built with the possibility of Geneva becoming a port one day firmly established in the minds of those who conceived the project. The Rhone-to-the-Rhine canal, or its myth, emerged again when extensive works were being made to irrigate the plain of the Broye, when the Broye and the Thielle canals linked the lakes of Morat, Neuchatel and Biel, and when the Aar was channeled into the lake of Biel through the Aar canal. Back in the 17th century, it was almost possible to go from Neuchatel to Geneva on boat thanks to the Entremont Canal, which joined the Orbe plain to Cossigny. From Cossigny to Morges, goods were transported on carts because the Venoge was no longer navigable. Today this canal has been filled in and there are few remaining traces of it.

In 1965, a special commission studied the feasibility of a fluvial link from Basle to Geneva and concluded that it was economically senseless. "Transhelvetica", the association that had fought for the Rhone-to-the-Rhine Canal for decades, decided that this study had been inspired by jealous railway and road interests and that its conclusions were therefore not valid. Transhelvetica commissioned the Battelle Institute to make a study of its own. The Institute, taking the social profit into account, arrived at different conclusions. The issue was becoming rather delicate and political, and Federal Council commissioned another team of experts, well separated from commercial interests, to see the problem for themselves. Unfortunately for the Transhelvetic-canal supporters, its findings are that it would pay to make the Rhine navigable up to Klingnau, where the Aar meets the Rhine, because the port of Basle will soon be overburdened, but not, in the present economic set-up, create a navigable channel further upstream.

However, the matter is not yet settled and the Federal Council, according to a traditional procedure, has submitted the Commission's report to the individual cantons. They have up to 31st July to give their opinion to Berne. The Federal Council should be making concrete proposals at the beginning of 1971. There is no doubt that the possibility of cruising from Geneva to Basle on a chriscraft is very alluring and would make Swiss waters especially attractive. The value of a transhelvetic motorway would be predominantly touristic since canals have long lost their competitiveness with railway, with the possible exception of particularly bulky raw materials. The realisation of such a project will depend on whether "touristic" can be equated with "economic" in this case.

(PMB)

# SWISS NEWS

## FEDERAL

### New military credits held in reserve

In a "message" to Parliament, the Federal Council asked for renewed credits of about 200 million francs for improving military fortifications, extending training-fields, buying land and acquiring communication and sapping equipment. The Federal Council, which had only the week before submitted a series of economic dampening measures to Parliament, was well aware that the proposed expenditure would have effects going against these measures. For this reason it has suggested that Parliament should accept the principle of the expenditure and leave the time of actual outlay to the good judgment of the Department for Finance. This means that Parliament will be voting for credits (which are available but which may not be spent because of the official policy of restraint) to be used at an unspecified time.

### The national roads budget

Switzerland is to spend 765 million francs on its highways this year. This sum is 35 million francs larger than what was foreseen in the Budget and will allow the opening of 90km of new highways across the country. Fifty-five million francs spent in excess of last year's budget written down on this year's account will soon have to be voted. New motorway stretches to be shortly opened to traffic are 26km on the N.2 between Augst (Bl) and Haerkingen (So) passing through Lenzburg and Daettwil (Ag) and 14km between Attikon (Zh) and Waengi (Tg). The remainder lies in central Switzerland, the largest stretch being on the Simplon highway in the Valais. In French-speaking Switzerland there will not be any new span of motorway opened to traffic but present works will continue. Vaud gets 63 million francs, 56 for works and seven for land acquisition. The main effort will be centered on the N.9 where work on the Villars-Sainte-Croix to Venne stretch will be nearing completion. Neuchatel gets 20 million for work between Saint-Blaise and the Bernese border. Geneva gets six million, four of which will be devoted to purchase of land and two for the completion of the link between the Geneva to Lausanne motorway and Cointrin airport.

### Switzerland and the U.N.

A high-ranking civil servant, Mr. Langenbacher, was the outspoken herald of the growing opinion that Switzerland should join the U.N., at a recent youth conference on civil problems. He maintained that joining the U.N. was not only a question of solidarity with the world community but also a question of preserving our vital interests within the U.N. organisation. Switzerland should avoid keeping at a distance from U.N. activities when

these were having to bear increasingly on the life of our country. In keeping out of U.N., Switzerland would be increasingly dependent on it, and this was precisely what she was trying to avoid in not adhering to it. Adhesion could only be considered if Swiss neutrality were safeguarded, but her policy could inspire trust only if it remained adaptable, which meant that the traditional Swiss policy of neutrality should be understood as something dynamic and alive if it was not to become degraded and sterile. A fact to be recognised was that neutrality had become more compatible with the United Nations Charter since the end of the war, furthermore, the contribution of neutral countries had been greatly appreciated within the organisation. The experience of many years had confirmed that the U.N. offered better conditions for a country ready to offer its peace-fostering services to the world. Therefore, the Swiss tradition of looking into other countries' problems with impartiality could be better played within the U.N.

(ATS)

#### Controversy over the export deposit

To slow down our over-heated economy, the Federal Council has decided to install an "export deposit" of 5%, practically the reverse of the British "import deposit". Naturally, the parties most concerned by the success of our exports were strongly opposed to the scheme. It is surprising to note that the Union of Swiss Trade Unions, representing the more leftish tendencies, expressed the strongest opposition whereas the Christian-Social Conservatives, who represent many self-employed people, accepted the export deposit. The trade unions are so well aware of the benefits to working people of the Swiss liberal structure that it condemns Mr. Celio's attempts at planning economy. Moreover, they complain that the export deposit goes against the liberalisation of trade recommended by the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and that it is contrary to the spirit of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The Conservatives accept the export deposit as long as it remains temporary. They believe that the measure will take effect too late to be of any use. They have produced a report underlining the lack of co-ordination between financial, monetary and economic policies in Switzerland. They recommend a new Advisory Commission on economic co-ordination, answerable to the Federal Council.

#### The "Pro Helvetia" subsidy to the "Neutralität" review is maintained

Before "Neutralität" took to attacking Mr. Von Moos on his anti-semitic past, a national councillor from Berne had already asked why "Pro Helvetia" was backing a publication that had described Switzerland as "a rabbit-hutch that has to be cleaned" and put the question to the Federal Council.

In its answer, the Council said that "Pro Helvetia" was a public founda-

tion "designed to keep alive the original aspects of our culture, to encourage the creation of the mind and to entertain cultural relations abroad". The Foundation was left with considerable freedom, a guarantee that the State would not use its financial aid as a pretext for influencing artistic life or even for placing it in its own service. "Pro Helvetia" had therefore no answers to give over its decision to allocate 12,000 francs to "Neutralität" annually. The Directing-Committee had originally refused to give this sum, asked for by the Editor of the review, on the grounds that "Pro Helvetia" was there to support purely cultural publications and not political-cultural journals. However, "Neutralität" being increasingly devoted to culture, the Committee had come back on its decision and voted an annual grant of 12,000 francs on October 30th 1969. This money was to help to pay the salary of a secretary and to tip the contributors to the paper.

(ATS)

#### The third world

The Government has been studying the implications of a recent study by the Organisation for Economic and Commercial Development for the Swiss aid programme to the Third World. Switzerland spends well over the legendary 1% of its national income on developing countries, but most of the money consists of private investments. Last year, of a total of 1,046 million francs, only 81.7 million were disinterested public help. This means that the Swiss are the most generous in absolute outlay, but the most stingy in public help. Although the change in the shape of Swiss aid to the Third World will not take place in the predictable future, the structure and efficiency of this aid is now being seriously examined by the Government. Many Swiss (especially the young) have been asking for increased public aid. The Federal Council may well decide on this and propose increased credits to Parliament.

#### Increased old-age pensions

Three initiatives are pending for a revision of the federal old-age pension scheme. These initiatives have been launched by both Socialists and Conservatives and aim at guaranteeing older people a decent standard of living. According to the "7th revision" of the old-age pension scheme, pension benefits are to be augmented periodically to match an increased cost of living and increased wages. This decision took effect in October of last year when the pension of bachelors was increased from 3,000 to 3,900 francs p.a., that of couples from 4,800 to 6,240 and that of orphans from 1,500 to 1,950. The head of the Department of Home Affairs, Federal Councillor H. P. Tschudi, has recently implied a future 10% increase of these benefits. More specifically, "supplementary contributions" from the cantons will be increased so that people living alone will soon be getting 4,500 fr, couples 7,200

fr and orphans 2,250 fr. The number of people benefitting from pensions would also increase from 175,000 to 195,000.

(ATS)

#### The "Bonjour Report" to be translated by "Pro Helvetia"

Although this sensational disclosure of Swiss war-time history, extracts of which have recently appeared in some papers, has been commissioned by the Government, the latter is intent on having the report translated into French by a non-official body. The translation, just as the original, is to be as independent and free from the official mark as possible. The trouble is that the report is voluminous and that few Swiss editors are ready to stake the cost of such an important translation. The solution now appears to have been found in "Pro Helvetia"'s readiness to finance this undertaking.

(ATS)

#### Two-thirds of Swiss women favourable to the right of vote

A thousand Swiss women aged between 15 and 54 were questioned on their feelings towards the right of vote and eligibility of women. 62% voted in favour of female right of vote, 31% stood against it and 7% had no opinion. In German-Switzerland, the majority of the "suffragettes" was relatively small: 54% compared with 83% in French-speaking Switzerland, where only 9% of the women questioned declared themselves opposed to their future right of vote.

Younger women showed more interest: 56% of women above 45 were in favour of the right of vote, the figure was 64% for women under that age.

In the well-to-do classes, 70% of women support their political rights, 24% are opposed to them and 6% have no opinion. Only 59% of the materially poorer women were for them and 35% against.

(ATS)

#### Peasants try to buy back their farms from the Army

The mayors of Montfaucon, La-Joux and Les Genevez, three villages in the Jura, and the delegate from Saingléier at the Bernese Great Council met in the office of the head of the Military Department, Mr. Gnaegi, at the Federal Palace. The object of their discussion was to find ways of re-acquiring land previously bought by the Army for training purposes. The mayors want 3.8 million francs, a sum which includes the reconstruction of one of the farms. Mr. Gnaegi said that this repurchase could not be made within the planned delay (next March) but that it will have to be postponed for three years. Time for the Jurassions to become more restive.

(ATS)

#### No renewal of the export-permit provisions for the watch industry

In order to protect the value of the "Swiss made" brand, exports of watch components have been severely controlled according to a Federal decree

passed in 1961 and which will expire in 1971. This decree will not be renewed but be replaced by a new legal protection of the Swiss name. Watches will henceforth be officially considered as "Swiss" when their movements are assembled, set and started in Switzerland and when at least 50% of the value of their components are of Swiss origin.

The export permit had to be installed because of the strong temptation to export Swiss-built components and assemble them cheaply abroad, selling the completed product as a "Swiss" watch, thereby lowering the quality of goods traditionally associated with Swiss craftsmanship. Conditions have changed however. Countries which 10 years ago were unable to manufacture a good watch can do so now, which means that competition has become far stiffer. The abolishment of the export permit will help the watch industry in its export drive.

(ATS)

## POLITICAL LIFE

### For a reduction of the number of parties

The President of the Zurich Socialist Party has exposed his political conceptions in a recent press conference. He was strongly opposed to the aims of middle-class parties and the Independent Alliance (the "Migros" party) because they did not lead to a policy of social progress and improved legislative control of administration. The only way to do away with the compromise policies reigning in the Zurich legislature was to pave the way for a concentration of parties. Only the main and established parties should stay. This would end the alternating solutions presented by small, local, political groupments.

(ATS)

### A high-level Communist executive in Geneva

The Genevese have had to vote a new "administrative councillor" and make their choice between a liberal and a communist candidate. Rather lazily, only 24% turned out, they voted for Mr. Roger Dafflon, member of the Swiss Labour Party.

There was some upstir in Berne, where some embassies were reported to have asked the Government for enlightenment. This Communist victory didn't please the bulk of Swiss Socialists. Mr. Hubacher, the Socialist national councillor from Basle and dubious hero of the "Florida" affair, claimed that a Communist victory would appear too revolutionary to the middle-class who would react strongly and isolate the Socialist movement, hampering its action.

## ARMS TRAFFIC

Swiss authorities are applying the ruling on the the transit of arms through Switzerland very diligently. Last December, Swissair personnel accidentally found 45 machine guns in the luggage of a Beirut-bound plane. The weapons were seized and two Lebanese, who had used the airline to transport them

from Vienna to Lebanon, were put under arrest and charged with illegally transiting arms through Switzerland. They were released from custody some two weeks later but the enquiry has now only just ended and probably lead to a trial. A month later, it was for the Israelis to be the victims of Swiss conscientiousness, and crates of Israel-bound arms were seized at Cointrin airport. The latest incident was the confiscation of a Swiss-made "magnetron", a radar component, awaiting to be flown over to Israel in a Kloten storehouse. The Israelis have been complaining at this rather wide acceptance of the notion of "military material".

(ATS)

## UNEASINESS IN THE SWISS CATHOLIC CLERGY

On 27th January, Monseigneur Charrière, Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg and Monseigneur Pierre Mamie, surrogate Bishop, signed an article in the Fribourg daily "La Liberté" deplored the "wind of revolt" that had surged forth in Holland and which was already perturbing the Swiss clergy.

There were no immediate reactions in French-Switzerland to this episcopal message but in German-Switzerland 140 priests chose to voice their disapproval in two important papers, the "Basler Nachrichten" and the "Tages Anzeiger".

They said that the two bishops had not had the right to speak "on behalf of the immense majority" of Swiss priests since no opinion survey had ever been carried out. They maintained that what had been happening in Holland was not a "priests revolt" but the expression of a will both anchored in justice and theology. There had never been any question of abolishing the celibacy of Catholic priests and thereby of "destroying one of the most precious treasures of the Church" (as held by the two bishops): it was a question of not confusing ministry and celibacy. "We appreciate celibacy as a way of life", wrote the protesters, "but we believe that married men should be allowed to minister in the Church". Such a thing was admitted by the most ancient of Christian traditions.

What did fidelity to the Pope and the Church mean, if not a concern for the present situation and the future and a refusal to accept petrified traditions? Many people would be ready to take up priesthood if they were given the choice between celibacy and marriage.

The Catholic wind of change was also felt during a theological meeting in Fribourg, where 84 Swiss, German and Austrian professors in theology addressed an open letter to the Episcopate. They said that the problem of celibacy in the Latin Church had become very serious, not only in Holland but also in Switzerland, Austria and Germany and could lead to a schism in the Catholic Church. They could not remain passive in front of such a threat and held that even those who were not

against the rule of celibacy would place the unity of the Church above a disciplinary law which had neither been kept in force at all times nor everywhere in the Church. There was no reason for letting the Dutch clergy grapple alone with its problems and for ignoring the growing importance which these problems were taking today throughout the Church. The signatories therefore urged their bishops to solicit in Rome officially, in accordance with their responsibility in the Church as reaffirmed by Vatican II, an urgent and wanted dialogue.

(*Journal de Genève*)

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 42 mobilised for war, 10 comply . . .

Forty-two men belonging to anti-aircraft units received draft cards, mobilising them for war by mistake. Ten of them actually made the journey to the assembling-place (having doubtless packed their gear according to the prescription of the "little red book"). The others, having not read of any forthcoming wars in the papers (or heard the distant rumble of bombs) took the trouble to phone their local military headquarters. The enquiry revealed that the draft cards had been prepared by the company's quartermaster and sent in an open envelope to the captain for control. However, the cards fell out and were conscientiously mailed to their addresses by postal officials, so that the captain only received a large, empty envelope.

(ATS)

### A wolf chase in Zurich's Zoo

The strong winds that swept over Zurich, one February night, felled four birches in the wolves' enclosure in Zurich Zoo. In the morning a keeper found a wolf leisurely poised at the entrance gate. There followed a heated beat for the five animals that had gone loose. Twenty-four guards armed themselves with brooms (the most useful implement in such circumstances) and gradually compelled the wolves to get in their enclosure, and eventually into their cages, where they were locked until reparation of the fence. The guards had particular trouble with the male. They only managed to overcome him after three hours of effort with the help of a net. During the night the wolves had feasted on a very rare species of duck and on four of the silver gulls enlivening the pond above the Zoo's restaurant.

(ATS)

### Festival of Youth Orchestras

The International Festival of Youth Orchestras, a new annual event in St. Moritz, is there to stay. It will be held for the second time from 17th to 30th August. Japanese and American Youth Orchestras are already giving concerts to pay for their journey. The event is sponsored by the Swiss National Tourist Office.

(ATS)

## RECENT DEATHS

Otto Mayer, former chancellor of the International Olympic Committee, 69, in Lausanne. He was elected to this post in 1946 and took a prominent part in the organisation of many Olympic Games. He has also edited the Bulletin of the International Olympic Committee for 18 years. He was a Montreux jeweller and brother of the late Albert Mayer who was a member of the Swiss Olympic Committee.

René Doria, a Geneva industrialist and sports patron, 68, in Geneva. He was very well known in the commercial world of Geneva and founded a biscuit factory bearing his name. He had twice attempted to cross the Channel, only just failing. He was Honorary President of the Swiss Ski Federation.

Emile Pinget, a well-known Geneva businessman, 76, in Geneva. He was active in insurance (Helvetia, Mutuelle Vaudoise Accidents, Geneva Chamber of Insurance Brokers), in tourism (as a member of the Geneva committee of the Swiss Touring Club) and in horse-racing, where he will be remembered as one of the founders of the International Geneva Horse-riding Competition. He had moreover a brilliant military career, climbing to the rank of colonel.

Jean-Jacques Du Pasquier, 66, in Neuchâtel. He was a locally-renowned architect and one-time president of the municipal legislature.

(ATS)

## CANTONAL

### Historic decision in Lausanne

The Catholic clergy in Vaud are to enjoy the same advantages as Protestant pastors, that is, they are to be salaried by the State and receive public ecclesiastical funds in proportion to the Catholic population of the Canton (27% in 1960). Catholic schools, on the other hand, will no longer be allowed to accept communal subsidies, but the Catholic clergy of Vaud has already decided to create a common school-fund to be replenished by personal contributions from their increased earnings.

Vaud then maintains the union between Church and State and automatically pays the "wages" of the servants of the Church (as do the Protestant cantons of Zurich, Berne, Basle, Schaffhausen, Appenzel and the Catholic cantons) without, however, accepting the system of a special and voluntary ecclesiastical tax (the case of most protestant and mixed cantons) and total financial separation as in Geneva.

(*Gazette de Lausanne*)

## TWO DISASTERS

With an air disaster costing 47 lives and an avalanche which killed 30 servicemen and civilians, February was distinctly a "black month" for Switzerland.

At 1.14 p.m. on Saturday, 31st February, the "Coronado" airliner of Swissair's regular flight from Zurich to

Tel Aviv took off from Kloten airport. Twenty-two minutes later, the plane crashed in the "Würenlinger Unterwald", a wood wedged between the railway line and the Aar a few hundred yards from the Würenlingen and Beznau reactors, cutting out a glade of charred and splintered stems 300 yards wide and 500 yards long. Reaching Burten and having gained an altitude of 4,300m, the pilot radioed Kloten saying that he believed an explosion had hit the back of the plane and that he was planning to return. He also suggested to Control that policemen should be waiting for them at the airport. A few minutes later, he reported that heavy smoke had penetrated into the pilot's cabin and that it was getting very difficult to read the dials and navigational aids. Kloten radioed back giving the permission to open the cockpit window. By that time, the plane had swerved north, run on a straight stretch for a minute or two, and was now trying to align for landing and was losing altitude. The situation must have become intolerable and the pilot radioed from his smoke-gutted cabin: "We cannot do any more, thank you very much". These were his last and laconic words. The shock of the crash had been so great that the aircraft was reduced to a million twisted bits of metal half buried in the wet earth. The "black box", containing the records of the flight, was as usual half-destroyed and unusable. Specialists in ballistics considered that the plane must have blown

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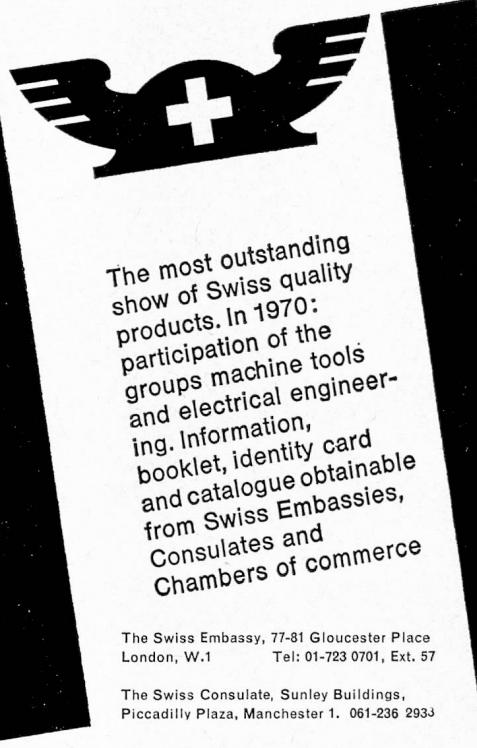
(*Gazette de Lausanne*)

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Swiss  
Industries Fair Basle  
11th-21st April 1970



The Swiss Embassy, 77-81 Gloucester Place  
London, W.1 Tel: 01-723 0701, Ext. 57

The Swiss Consulate, Sunley Buildings,  
Piccadilly Plaza, Manchester 1. 061-236 2933

up immediately before the impact. The enquiry was made particularly difficult by the disintegrated state of the plane but, naturally enough, heavy suspicion rested on Palestinian organisations. So far, no action has been taken by the Government besides increased control of airliners and visas for passengers from the Middle East.

#### The avalanche

After 40 tourists had been killed in their snow-invaded dining-hall at Val d'Isère, four skiers carried away at Zermatt, after countless other avalanches throughout the Alps, the mountain struck at Reckingen at a spot where an avalanche hadn't been seen in a hundred years. The main victims were servicemen living in the anti-aircraft quarters of Gluringen. Rescue work was organised promptly (the Valais has a special "catastrophe"-contingency plan) but, as usual, the victims were exhumed from the snow too late.

#### HISTORY IN THE JURA

The most important cantonal vote so far this year was held in the Canton Berne. On March 1st the electorate of Berne voted transitional provisions on the Jura (provisions which will eventually give its inhabitants the right of deciding on their own political future) with an overwhelming majority. The "Statute of Autonomy" has therefore been accepted by Jurassians, including the Separatists.

## ECONOMIC ITEMS

#### "Swisspack 70": International Packaging Exhibition in Basle

An international packaging exhibition entitled "Swisspack 70" will be held in Basle from March 3rd to 7th, 1970. The halls of the Swiss Industries Fair will house 185 exhibitors displaying the products of 12 countries in an area of over 200,000 square feet. "Swisspack 70" will be more than a trade fair; it will serve as a background for press information days, professional meetings and the Swiss Packaging Contest. The exhibition itself will feature a packaging chain and a shop of the future as well as a design centre and a technical information stand, illustrating the many possibilities of future developments. Modern industrial packaging serves, for example, to protect merchandise, simplify transport, prepare goods for longer storage and to extend the firm's advertising. The importance of packaging is widely recognised by advertising experts who have coined the slogan "a product well packed is half way sold".

(OSEC)

#### Geographical reliefs in education

Switzerland, the home of Pestalozzi, has always paid great attention to the problems of children's education. In line with this tradition, a Lausanne teacher (canton of Vaud) specialising in the publication of educational works

and equipment, distinguished himself at the last Inventors' Salon in Brussels, where he was awarded a silver-gilt-medal for his geographical reliefs. Intended for a practical and active study of geography, these reliefs in plastic can easily be painted by the student. Representing, for example, mountain ranges, glaciers (with their névés and moraines) mountain streams with their catchment reservoirs, ravines and volcanic defecation cones, land masses and the seas with their isthmuses, islands, estuaries, deltas, etc., they make practical projects possible in dimensions accessible to the child. Thus, for example, the pupil will be able to indicate the site of a port, glue on a match to represent a jetty, add lighthouses simplifying coastal navigation, etc. With modelling clay, he will mark the dam in the Nile delta, and imagine the appearance of the delta in a few hundred years time . . . In fact, the possibilities of practical exercises are countless and depend only on the imagination of the teacher and child. Each relief is accompanied by a short explanatory note. The same Swiss inventor is also launching plastic letters and figures, with sunken reliefs, on the market. The child's eye registers the graphism of the figure or the letter while his finger retains its shape. This is ideal material for teaching reading and the beginning of writing in a development class, an infant or nursery class.

(OSEC)

#### A big new foodstuffs firm in Europe

In order to cope with the ever growing competition on the world foodstuffs market, two Swiss firms, Ursina Co. Ltd. and Interfranck Co. Ltd. have just formed a merger. It is a question of multinational reorganisation within Europe, on a Swiss base. With a turnover of one billion Swiss francs (US \$232.5 million), Ursina was 25th in the world ranking for foodstuffs firms. This company has production centres and sales companies in several European countries, as well as in North Africa, Australia, Venezuela and Siam. In addition to traditional products (butter, cheeses, fresh produce), the Ursina range comprises baby-foods, confectionery, canned fruits and vegetables as well as wines. Interfranck's manufacturing programme (turnover: S.Fr 450 million, i.e. U.S. \$104 million) comprises coffee based products, quality groceries, mineral waters and fruit juices, paints, dyes, etc. Interfranck's activity also includes banking institutes, in particular the Commercial Bank in Zurich. The merger between Ursina and Interfranck was made simpler by the fact that the two companies ideally complete each other with regard to their products and the various national markets to which they cater. Ursina-Franck Co. Ltd., with its main office in Berne and a turnover of 1.45 billion francs (U.S. \$337.2 million) will be the fifth biggest European food concern.

(OSEC)

#### Paillard's European activities

For some time the firm of Paillard Co. Ltd. in Yverdon (canton of Vaud) had been considering collaboration with a foreign partner not only in the field of movie cameras and projectors but also in its main sector, the production of typewriters. Its medium size—it had a turnover of 117 million Swiss francs (U.S. \$27 million) in 1968 and numbers 4,260 employees—was not sufficient to allow it to cope effectively with international competition on several fronts at once. An operation in two stages enabled it to take over the production set-up of Japy (France) typewriters and shortly afterwards of the Japy-France distribution network. But would Paillard nevertheless have to give up its movie-camera production as it had already done with music boxes and record-players, in order to concentrate all its efforts on a single sector? Such an amputation would have been in flagrant contradiction with the size of the investments already made, as well as with the prestige of Bolex, the "Rolls Royce" of movie cameras. Paillard had therefore to look for alliance which would enable it to improve the profitability of a wonderful sector that was unfortunately at the same time too small for it to be able to keep up much longer in the face of overwhelming foreign competition. Realisation of this fact decided Paillard to join forces with the Austrian company of Eumig—whose movie cameras can be likened to the "Volkswagens" of the cinema—and to found a joint company, Bolex International Co. Ltd., with its main office at Sainte Croix (Canton of Vaud). Collaboration between Eumig and Paillard will make it possible to pool all technical discoveries. The Austrian firm's potential is almost twice as large as that of Paillard in the movie sector. Working in a single field, Eumig has some 3,000 employees, while the Bolex department of Paillard totals some 1,200 employees.

(OSEC)

#### Elevators: the dynamism of a Swiss group of world standing

The Swiss elevator (lift) and electrical motors factory, Schindler & Co. Ltd. at Ebikon (Canton of Lucerne), has taken over the majority of the capital of the oldest elevator factory in France, Roux Combaluzier. The new company—Roux Combaluzier Schindler (RCS)—will occupy second place on the French elevator market. Its turnover to start with will be in the neighbourhood of 150 to 220 million French francs (34.8 to 51.8 million dollars). Roux Combaluzier, which has doubled its output in the last 10 years, decided to become integrated in a European group capable of competing with the big American firms, rather than merge with a foreign competitor of lesser stature. That is why its choice fell on Schindler, which is the second biggest