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## TOPICS

#### GENEVA COMMISSION SEEKS PROTECTION FROM COMPUTER BANKS

Protecting the individual against unwarranted disclosure of private information by data banks is a principal aim of a resolution drawn up by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which is meeting in Geneva.

As a step towards preparing international legislation, the resolution asks governments and bodies having consultative status with the United Nations to provide details of national practices and any court decisions.

According to written and verbal submissions to the commission, the evolution of the computer is now proceeding with such rapidity that four years from now a speed of 1,000 million operations per second will be attained.

A matchboxful of computer records can already hold a quantity of information, which if printed, would fill a cathedral up to the roof. On the horizon of technology is a laser scanning process that would enable a 20-page dossier on each of the two hundred million people in the United States to be stored on a single plastic tape reel.

One common fear, reflected in the interventions of several delegates, is that the computer's ability to collate enormous amounts of information on any given subject may also lead to "an abdication of human responsibility for making important judgments".

Personal details on individuals were formerly scattered throughout Government departments in separate folders, and could not in practice all be brought together in one place. However, much of this information, in industrialised nations, is now held in the storage systems of different computers, which will ultimately become interconnected into a single network.

In several western countries, credit protection firms are building up unofficial computerised files on the majority of the population with minimal safeguards against erroneous entries and little remedy against this information being sold to any interested party.

According to surveys put before the commission, no country so far provides an adequate degree of legal protection against the ever more sophisticated techniques. In general, the law governing privacy is "uncoordinated and unsatisfactory". Many experts believe that the individual should be given the opportunity to ensure that information about him in data banks is accurate and that he should also be able to ascertain to whom it is given.

("The Times", March 18th)

#### THE SUCCESS OF FAITH HEALERS

The "Schweizer Illustrierte" published a report on two faith healers operating in central Switzerland. One, Franz Wetzel in Ennetbaden, prescribed magnetic water. The other, 60year-old Martin Weber from Küssnachts am Rigi, was a travelling faith healer with regular consulting hours around the week in Küssnacht, Lucerne and Baden. His procedure is to prescribe to his patients the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, the number of recitations depending on their ailment. He has been working as a faith healer for the past 18 years and is well known in the area as the "Chnebelidoktor".

The "Schweizer Illustrierte" conducted an open correspondence with its readers and it was interesting to see the varied and conflicting evidence given by readers on the cases of both Franz Wetzel and Martin Weber. One woman reader was impressed by the powerful flux which she felt flowing through her when Wetzel had laid his hands upon her and didn't know what she ought to think of his treatment. Another correspondent emphatically testified on the marvellous powers of "Herr Wunderdoktor". She had suffered from a nerve inflammation in the arm against which the injections given to her by a doctor had been inaffective. The healer had first asked her what her ailment was and had then applied his hands on her arm. The treatment had lasted three minutes. Seven other patients were waiting in he room. There was no fixed fee, everybody being invited to give what they could, and the lady left 10 francs as she left. She had come back for two further sessions and had never felt any pains in her arms since.

Another female reader categorically asserted that she had been swindled and fiddled by Franz Wetzel, whom she qualified as a quack. She had visited a second healer recommended to her in Birmensdorf and had been charged 20 francs for a laying-on of hands lasting three minutes. All told, of nine letters printed in the "Schweizer Illustriere", three had a positive view on the effects of faith healing, three letters were frankly negative, another letter had come from a reader in Bremgarten who had visited both regular doctors and healers and had finally been cured by the skills of the former. The two remaining readers seemed uncertain.

Martin Weber, the faith healer of Küssnacht, is convinced that his methods are effective. A patient who may suffer from persistent backache can receive his care in the back room of the "Tribschen", a restaurant in Lucerne, every second Friday and Saturday. Having asked where the trouble lies with a friendly smile. Weber will lay his hands on his neck, close his eyes and mutter an incomprehensible formula and then say: "Six Our Father's will make you completely fit again!"

The patient leaves for home again, the treatment having not lasted longer than a couple of minutes, and drops a voluntary ten-franc note. Weber is sure that he has real healing powers. Science is in fact ready to acknowledge the existence of such powers. The Catholic Church, who expressed its position in the same report, believes that faith healing is both genuine and morally acceptable. It is sanctioned by the Scriptures, which refer to it in Corinthians and the Book of Job. But the Church objects to the invocation of religion in faith healing. The prayer wheel repetition of the Lord's Prayer belongs more to suprestition than to the Christian faith. However, there is a good reason why faith healers like Martin Weber should invoke God. It is a good way of inspiring confidence in their patients. Confidence is an indispensable condition to their recovery because their sickness is nearly always psychological.

Writing in the Swiss Mercantile Society's weekly organ, André Marcel made the interesting comment that faith healers have replaced the traditional family doctor, who has practically disappeared and subsists only in villages. Now, one must wait for days or weeks to get an appointment with city doctors overburdened with the sophisticated complaints of modern man. It has been estimated that a third of doctor's patients have imaginary diseases. They, in fact, only suffer from anxiety. These are the cases which faith healers can handle more adequately than registered doctors, precisely because the patients are not physically sick and because the important thing is to inspire them with confidence. Faith healers, when they are not charlatans out to make money, can achieve far more intimate personal relationships with their patients than busy doctors. They are in a position to shoulder the important human role traditionally played by the family physician. A faith healer will visit his patients or receive them as friends. The contact which he can establish with them will bring back the confidence and hope which official medicine cannot necessarily offer them.

There is naturally a varying quality of faith healing. Mr. Martin Weber of Küssnacht am Rigi obviously doesn't conform to the idealised picture of the faith healer described above. His interpretation of the profession would have been forbidden in a canton like Vaud until recently. Vaud had very severe laws against faith healing and unofficial medicine. In fact, all illegal practises of medicine were condemned. A person was technically breaking the law if he told a friend that he had a cold, because he was making a medical diagnosis while not being a registered doctor. If he furthermore encouraged his friend to take a cough syrup, he was breaking the law a second time. Today unofficial medicine is tolerated in Vaud. A cantonal initiative was prepared to authorise faith healers to practise their art in all freedom. Although the authorities recognised the need for a change in the law, they thought that the proposed initiative was going a bit too far and suggesed a compromise, which was accepted. Now unofficial medicine is permitted in Vaud as long as it does not prejudice regular medicine and as long as those who practise it do so out of genuine concern for their patients and not out of lucre. These criteria must be hard to control in practise, but they are a fair delimitation of the activities which should rightfully be allowed to faith healers.

#### A TYPICAL HUMAN PROBLEM POSED BY THE REGULATIONS ON SEASONAL MANPOWER

Foreign workers in Switzerland are classified as "seasonal" workers, "annual" workers and "resident" workers. Seasonals are only allowed employment in the industries whose labour requirehents vary seasonally. These are generally the building and hotel industries. Seasonal workers arrive in Switzerland in the course of February and leave in September, and can make the regular return journey from Italy or elsewhere during decades. They are not allowed to rent furnished flats, which means that they must live in barracks or in the cheap accommodation supplied to them by their employers. They are furthermore not allowed to bring in their families and in the present circumstances have no guarantee of obtaining one day the status of "annual" workers.

The latter enjoy a limited stay permit renewable each year. At the end of ten years of continuous employment in Switzerland they may apply for a residence permit. Their condition is similar to that of their Swiss workmates. They are allowed to have their families and to rent a flat, when they can find one. As they do not have very exigent standards in the field of housing, they often occupy dilapidated flats which the Swiss would not accept to live in.

This distinction in the legal status and practical possibilities of seasonal and yearly workers can lead to the following kind of painful situation described in "La Suisse".

Angelo falls in love with young Bernadetta in the spring of 1970. Bernadetta works in metallurgy (annual permit), whereas Angelo works in building (seasonal permit). Marriage takes place in May 1970. A child, little Pasquale, is born the following February in Switzerland. Being the son of a seasonal worker, Pasquale will have to leave his country of origin (and native land!) within the next few months. If all goes well, he will be able to leave at the same time as his father, in December 1971. Such cases are very numerous and always painful.

The commentator of "La Suisse" claimed that it was time that a firm choice was made. Either the Swiss people must consider that there are enough foreigners in the country and that it is impossible to improve their condition, however inhuman it may be, or they must accept that the seasonal workers which they require should be treated as human beings. But in that case, the number of foreigners will grow. The problem is what the French language terms as "Cornelian". It must be said in defence of Swiss immigration authorities that all seasonal workers know what to expect before they leave for Switzerland, and no illusory promises are made to them. The industries whose activities do not vary seasonally may not employ seasonal workers. They are thus employed in limited but vital sectors of the economy.

#### SHE GETS INSURED AGAINST SICKNESS AT 102 . . .

The Canton of Neuchatel is in the vanguard of cantons as far as the Welfare State is concerned. Its citizens voted last year in favour of a free Sickness Security for the benefit of persons over 65 years of age.

The background to this innovation was that many of the people who are 65 today have never been in a financial position to insure themselves against sickness. Said a retired watchmaker who had taken advantage of the new scheme: "My idea is that as long as there is life, there is hope. Since we have been offered a present, why not accept it? I have crossed through difficult years and during the crisis of the 1930's there were times when we were positively hungry. We could just about afford unemployment insurance but had nothing to spare to provide for the declining health of our old age. But this time comes faster than you expect and one finds that it is too late to register for a sickness pension".

Within a few weeks of the introduction of this redemptory scheme, over a thousand elderly citizens of Neuchatel had enrolled. Among them a 102-year-old lady. She clearly was out to get the most out of life, and of the Welfare State too!

#### RIGHT OF ASYLUM REFUSED TO THREE BULGARIAN FAMILIES

We mentioned in a past issue of the "Swiss Observer" that three Bulgarian families carrying simple visitors visas had found themselves stranded in Geneva without any means of support.

The Federal Police had ordered their repatriation because these ten people involved had already been granted political asylum by Turkey. An appeal by a voluntary lawyer from the Geneva section of the League of Human Rights was turned down by the Federal Department of Justice. The destitute families were driven to their plane bound for Turkey but managed to escape. The Geneva Section of the League of Human Rights continued to support their cause and sent a second appeal to the Department of Justice and Police which too was rejected.

At the time of writing, the Bulgarians have the possibility of appealing to the Federal Council but it is doubtful that it will over rule the decision of the Department of Justice and Police and the unwanted aliens will probably be extradited at the end of April. Like the many Commonwealth cases which British Immigration Officers have to deal with, this legally clear-cut affair was burdened with dramatic human aspects. The law was definitely with the authorities. The Bulgarians had in fact mislead the Swiss Consulate in Ankara which had issued them with their visas. It now appears that they had intended from the outset to settle in Switzerland and had hidden this fact from the Consulate.

#### "THE WATCH INDUSTRY IS RUNNING TO ITS DOOM"

This, at least, is the opinion of the Association of Makers of the "Roskopf Watch". They, and all the companies involved in the manufacture of cheap and robust watches are greatly concerned by a provision appearing in the new statutes of the watch industry passed by the National Council last December and debated this month by the Council of States.

This provision was the implementation for a period of ten years of the quality control of all watches qualifying for the "Swiss made" description. This control is intended to be carried out on production batches by federal inspectors, who will be empowered to refuse the expedition of any product not conforming to their specifications.

The manufacturers of Roskopf and lever watches find that such controls could undermine their position on the world market. They point out that 46 per cent of the output of the Swiss watch industry is made up of cheap watches, and that this proportion has never ceased to increase. By enforcing rigid quality standards on this kind of production the legislators will put the industry at a disadvantage with its foreign competitors. It is precisely in the field of cheap watches that world competition is the greatest.

world competition is the greatest. The American "Timex" company has increased its production of cheap watches from 1.5 million to 15 million pieces from 1952 to 1967. Last year, the Japanese watchmaker "Seiko" launched a new cheap product and placed 200,000 examples with American importers who were traditional customers of Swiss watches. Quality watches have little to fear from the new regulations, but international competition is not as strong at this level.

Makers of cheap watches have already pooled their resources and strengthened their economic position by manufacturing concentrations. They nonetheless require a reduction from 10 to 5 years of the proposed period of control. Should this indispensible alleviation be refused by the Council of States, then certain quarters will envisage a referendum.

#### PLANES BUILT IN SWITZERLAND

Six hundred firms were involved in the Mirage contract by the Swiss Air Force. As the last delivery was made over a year ago, the industry is left with an empty order book as far as military aircraft are concerned. The Air Force is currently seeking a replacement for the obsolete "Venom", but will probably not appeal to the Swiss aircraft industry.

A question which is often asked is whether Switzerland should have an aircraft industry at all. It has been recognised for a long time that such an industry could not compete with the aircraft industries of the major industrial countries. There was, however, a time when Switzerland built large passenger aircraft. Without going right back to the heroic age of aviation, one can mention the aeroplanes of Alfred Comte and Wild, the series of the DH 1, 2, 3, 5 and 5A models and, nearer to us, the construction of the revolutionary C35 aircraft.

Perhaps the main reason why Swiss industry should be interested in sharing a contract of the magnitude of the "Mirage" contract is that it is a great technological incentive. By producing modern aircraft components with their exceptionally high tolerances contracting firms are forced into being tooled up to the latest standards. The kind of orders involved with the joint production of a sophisticated aircraft is an incentive to refine both quality and methods of production.

For the time being, no order of particular technological merit appears to be forthcoming and the "Mirage" experience does not appear to be repeated ,although there is a possibility that Switzerland might build "Saab" fighters under license. There are nonetheless, three aircraft factories in Switzerland, all of them situated in the eastern, and traditionally, less industrialised parts of the country.

The most ancient is the Flugzueg und Fahrzeugwerke AG (FFA) at Al-



tenrhein. Since 1928 it has developed no less than 26 types of aircraft, from the giant Dornier DO X, which was powered by 12 engines and was the largest aircraft of its day, to the most recent glider. The firm is currently producing its new "Diamant" glider with great success. It is greatly appreciated by competition glider pilots for its comfort and strength. Many units have been exported to the U.S. It is built entirely in fibre glass, a material which confers an exceptional stability to its aerodynamic profile. Its span is 15 metres and it can reach speeds of 60 m.p.h.

Another aircraft currently in production is the trainer "Bravo", which has been developed jointly with an Italian firm, Siai-Marchetti. It is designed for pilot beginners and has been ordered by the Swiss Air Force. In 1950, the company took the initiative and the risk to develop a groundassault aircraft named the "P16". It first flew in April 1955 but was destroyed in September of the same year, falling in the Lake of Constance. A second prototype met with the same fate and the project was abandoned, although the experts now agree that it was an excellent aircraft and that the decision not to support it was an error.

The Federal Aircraft Factory at Emmen, which is part of FFA, is the best equipped for the sophistication of modern aircraft. It has a test centre with subsonic, transonic and supersonic wind tunnels. It is furthermore equipped with test banks for piston motors and reactors and has computing facilities to integrate aeronautical data. The Emmen factory not only serves the Air Force, but works for private industry as well. Foreign aircraft companies call on its specialised services and knowhow. It is currently engaged in development work on the 134-seat short haul "Mercure" aircraft being built by the French Dassault company. It is in the Emmen testing installations that the "moustaches", or forward retractable fins, which lend a great degree of stability to the Mirage V have been in-vented and developed. These "moustaches" are now covered by a patent jointly assigned to FFA and Dassault.

The FFA was design leader for the Swiss-built "Mirages" and responsible for their assembly. The company also has a team specialised in the structural problems of aircraft and equipped with spectacular installations for the continuous testing of fuselage and wings. Emmen engineers are actually working on the transformation of Switzerland's war-time C-36, which are still in good condition, and intend to replace their Hispano engines with Lyoming turbines. A series of 25 to 30 aircraft to be used as target haulers are in the course of transformation. Great Britain may be interested in acquiring a few units.

The *Pilatus* works at Stans were the makers of the P-2 and P-3 trainers

in use for decades in the Swiss Air Force. But the renown of the firm dates from the launching of its first "Porter" of which 200 have already been sold and for whose production a license has been acquired by Fairchild, an American company. The first "Porters" were powered by conventional piston engines. They were later mounted with French Astazou turbines, and then by American Lyoming PT-6 engines. Pilatus engineers are presently working on improving the Lyoming-powered version of the "Porter". The actual 340 h.p. motor will be replaced by 500 h.p. units and the aerodynamics of these rather square machines refined.

The "Porter" has been bought by Israel and some African countries. It has been used in Vietnam for nonmiiltary purposes. It has the remarkable quality of being content with a very short runway. British TV viewers had the opportunity of seeing this for themselves in early March when a programme on the Everest Expedition showed a "Porter" landing on a runway hardly longer than 200 yards and encased in a deep valley.

Pilatus have developed a two-engined aircraft derived from the "Porter" which however never went further than the prototype stage. An excellent turbine development of the P-3 trainer found no interest in the Swiss and foreign air forces and also had to be abandoned. It is believed that Pilatus are currently developing a new two-engined plane capable of transporting 12 passengers. Their latest realisation was the "B-4", an all-metal glider for performance flights and aerobatics.

#### A NEW "LITTLE RED BOOK"

The first Swiss "little red book", of which everyone has heard of, was a new manual on civil defence distributed to every Swiss soldier.

A second, equally controversial "little red book" has made its appearance in Swiss-German schools last year. This time, the advice given doesn't concern a hypothetical totalitarian enemy, but daily enemies like authoritarian teachers, reactionary parents and outdated sexual taboos. Intended for schoolchildren, it was originally published in Denmark. Its German translation raised a wave of protests and police involvement when it reached Switzerland. It has now been translated by a French teacher, Mr. Ernest Bolo, and published by a Marxist publishing house in Lausanne.

The "little red book" for schoolchildren has been banned in France. That it should have been allowed entry into Switzerland has outraged many parents and educationalists. The official reason for this demonstration of liberalism was that sixteen-year-old children are able to think for themselves. The immorality and revolutionary ideas of this publication were no worse than what was foisted upon them in magazines, books and cinemas each day.

But this was not the opinion of André Marcel, a journalist who writes regularly in the French section of the Swiss Mercantile Society's weekly organ. His virulent attacks against the booklet and its promoters cost him a trial for libel.

The only person originally empowered to ban the schoolchildren's "little red book" from Switzerland was the Attorney General. Now it is for the cantons to make individual decisions. In Geneva the book is only sold to persons above eighteen years of age. In Fribourg and the Valais, the opposition was such that the book cannot be found on any bookstall, although it had not at the time of writing been officially banned. In Neuchatel the book dealers themselves maintain censorship and refused to handle the "little red book".

What does the book say? Its central thesis is that there is no way of conciliating young and old generations. The youths for whom the booklet is intended must not bow down before their teachers. They have to assert themselves and keep their stand. For example, if the school toilets become clogged, the recommendation is to use those of the teachers rather than call the caretaker. The book is full of nearly clinical advice on the techniques of sex and contraception.

Free love is strongly encouraged. Girls are invited to yield to all the boys they please for their fulfilment. Retrograde and frustrated parents are charged with indulging in solitary practices. Pornography is heralded as a source of inspiration for lovemaking and teachers are invited to have relationships with their students.

The book purports to be the golden rule to a Shangri-La of pleasure and total freedom. A psychologist who is a marriage counsellor and director of the Mission of the Protestant Centre in Geneva found that the book had some positive aspects. Interviewed by "La Suisse", he said that not everything was negative in this work. "The accusation of passive methods of teaching and the indictment of certain elements of constraint in schools is acceptable. My chief reproach is that the book situates the school child in fundamental opposition with adults, and this will inevitably lead to a climate of mistrust. As for the chapters relating to sexual life, they are very dangerous because they limit love to its technical aspects. That the dimensions of feeling should have been ignored seem to me an unblievable aberation. However, I believe that a 16-year-old youngster is capable of discernment."

It was surprising that a book whose first target was school teachers should have been translated by a teacher.

# ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ITEMS

#### A New Time Study Appliance

A Swiss firm at Bettlach (Canton of Solothurn) recently launched a new time study appliance which won a gold medal at the last International Inventors Salon in Brussels. The "Time-O-Graph", as it is called, can be used wherever frequently repeated human or mechanical movements need to be recorded. It is particularly recommended therefore for firms carrying out work in series. Its advantages are many: time studies may be prolonged for as long as desired, it records both productive and unproductive periods. The results obtained are much more precise than those obtained by manual methods of timing. Once the appliance has been set up, the person being timed may continue his work without his usual rate being affected in any way, since all measurements are made fully automatically. The times are recorded on a strip of paper unwinding at constant speed; the number of motions is recorded by an impulse counter. In order to work out the average time per part, the total length of the graph is divided by the number of impulses and the result converted to the required unit of time. The appliance is supplied with several accessories enabling it to be adapted to the greatest possible number of work points. The Time-O-Graph also permits a rational organisation of work points and the immediate discovery of any irregularity in the operations involved. With the help of these precise details, it is often possible to shorten delivery dates considerably.

#### Gas Laser Theodolite:

#### **A Swiss Invention**

For the geophysical measurements it had to carry out, the second scientific expedition to the North Pole organised by the Canadian Department of Mining Energy and Natural Resources used Swiss-made theodolites which, in spite of the extreme atmospheric conditions, made it possible to observe Vega, Pollux and even the Pole Star, whose position at the Pole is almost zenithal. The factories that produced these instruments have just made a new combination of a gas laser with a seconds theodolite. The light from a gas laser is introduced directly into the optical axis of the theodolite telescope, by means of a flexible glassfibre cable. The ray together with a reticular cross is projected onto the object under observation. The centre of the mark thus coincides with the theodolite's line of sight. As a result of the glassfibre

cable, the laser is independent of the theodolite itself. This new laser theodolite offers great scope in industry as well as in civil engineering for checking tunnel boring machines for example.

### The First Swiss Postage Stamps of the Year

In 1971 Switzerland will issue two special sets of postage stamps; the first, which will be on sale on 11th March, will consist of 5 values. Two 10 centime stamps, "Youth and Sport". illustrate the new article of the constitution on gymnastics and sport, aiming to encourage the practice of these two events in boys' and girls' schools. Quite exceptionally, two stamps of the same value have been printed on the same sheet, with girls' and boys' faces alternating. The 20 centime stamp, "Children of the World", is devoted to the International Children's Aid Organisation, in favour of which a number of charity events will be held in Geneva next summer. The 30 centime stamp, on the other hand, is issued in connection with the National Exhibition of Philately, NABA, to be held in Basle from 4th to 13th June, 1971. The 50 centime stamp, issued on the occasion of the second ten year period of development aid, symbolised the close ties linking Switzerland and the developing countries in the field of development aid, while the 80 centime stamp, devoted to the World Space Telecommunications Conference, due to start in Geneva on 7th June, shows the satellite "Intelsat 4".

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