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entirely other world. The difference is unbridgeable and therefore the society which will respect black dignity will not be created with liberal charity, but with a Revolution. This is how the extremist sees things.

This also explains why black militants and radicals like Jerry Rubin hate to be interviewed: They know that they are being put on show before the eyes of a society which doesn't speak the same language. In a similar, but fortunately far milder way, the Swiss students feared that they would be patronised by the NSH and saw no point in it. They felt, like the black militant, that they wouldn't be understood anyway and that it was better to keep apart what couldn't be reconciled.

This of course doesn't mean that the NSH isn't for young people, it just happens that in 1971 the majority of them do not share its beliefs and that many others see it as irredeemably committed to sustaining an establishment which they are trying to break away from. There is no reason why the NSH should change its views to please the young. Two parties with different ideologies can co-exist and respect each other, in fact, this mutual respect is a necessary condition for a dialogue. But in order for a constructive dialogue between the NSH and the students to take place, the NSH will have to acknowledge the students as adult people with genuine beliefs. The students, on their part, will have to make sure that what they believe in is genuine. When this happens, they won't have any more qualms about not being respected.

(PMB)

SWISS NEWS IN BRIEF

The Federal Council answered a petition sent in last December by 527 Jurassian soldiers from the 9th Infantry Regiment. The note proclaimed the right of conscientious objection and the necessity for instituting a non-military welfare service. The Federal Council replied that the National Council had decided back in 1967 that the creation of such a civil service would not conform to the Federal Constitution. On the issue of conscientious objectors, it said that the harshness of their fate had been considerably mitigated in the recent past. The Federal Council referred the young petitioners to the private initiative launched last year in Basle in favour of an International Civil Service. If this initiative gathered enough signatures, said the Federal Council, then it would be for the Swiss people to give their suffrage on this issue in a democratic way.

A Press conference given by the President of the Confederation on the question of armaments gave the opportunity to Mr. Heiner P. Schulthess, Head of the Armaments Services, to inform the Press that the "Corsair" was still the favourite aircraft among the five short-listed types retained in the past two years. The evaluation now appears to be nearing conclusion. The "Corsair" is in fact the most costly of the ground-assault fighters under review. With the 1.3 billion francs allotted for the replacement of the Air

Force "Venoms" it would be possible to acquire 60 "Corsairs", 70 Dassault "Milans", 75 "Skyhawks", 80 "Hunters", 90 "Fiats" or 120 "Saabs".

The Federal Council made a most solemn appeal to the cantons and the communes to show more thrift in their spending, more particularly in their building projects. In a letter to the Council of States it underlined that "it was absolutely necessary to put a clamp on inflation to maintain the stability of the franc, to ensure peace of labour and to promote social justice". It furthermore hinted that new anti-inflationary measures were in the offing. Inflation also had its part to play in the very small profit of the Swiss GPO. The last postal increases were made in 1967, when local charges were increased from 10 cents to 20 cents and charges for the rest of the country increased from 20 to 30 cents. These measures had immediately brought in 128 million francs of new revenue to the Post Office, which had however been eroded to 15.8 million francs last year. There is therefore a serious possibility of a future increase in postal charges.

Processions were organised in the major towns of the country on 1st May. They were generally well ordered and peaceful, except in Zurich. Youth and foreign worker organisations ended their traditional march with brushes against the police, which had to make use of tear gas and made several arrests. On the streamers carried by the marchers one could read demands for 13-month wages, for popular retire-

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ment pensions and for more holidays in apprenticeship. The next day the Radical Party of Zurich demanded a reinforcement of the police force. On the subject of demonstrations, a decision by the new boss of French-speaking TV, Mr. Bernard Béguin, to ban a film on conscientious objection prompted 200 demos to march to TV headquarters. Their banners carried such invectives as "TV=The Opium of the People", "TV, no smell, no colour, no taste, only objectivity" and "Down with cultural oppression, let the people speak out!" The demos then marched to an abandoned church in which an amateur theatre group of a "Living Theatre" inspiration had camped for a few days before being jailed *en masse* in the prison of Saint Antoine.

Zurich had cantonal elections with women participation for the first time. The Socialists suffered badly from the outcome, the Communist Party was wiped out from the Great Council, the Radicals and the Liberals made some progress and a newcomer, The National Action (or Schwarzenbach party) won ten seats. These results could evidently be explained as a backlash by right-wing forces and the middle-class.

The watch-making firm of Depraz-Faure SA in Lausanne had to make 88 workers redundant in a rationalisation move. News of this nature is rare in the prosperous Switzerland of today and there was some local concern for the future of these men and their families.

At the village of Villaz sur Saint Pierre in Fribourg, a rather strange phenomena took place. For two anguished days water made its impromptu appearance in the house of one of the villagers. His young daughter found, out of the blue, that her bed was soaked. There was also water in her shoes. The house-owner went quietly to bed one night, having closed the dry drawers of his chest. The next day he opened it to find it filled with water. He took to his wardrobe and, lo and behold, it had turned into a limpid pool of water. Whenever the water was scooped away, it reappeared from nowhere. The cantonal chemist was called to investigate this phenomena. He analysed the liquid, proved that it was water, and furthermore showed that it wasn't only local water! Local water contained ammonia but no nitrates, whereas this water had a nitric composition! The family was about to emigrate from their house when the mysterious welling of water stopped. The village gossiped. The village priest, an amateur in psychical science, said that the pre-pubescent state of the young girl of the family had conjured up magnetic forces giving rise to this phenomenon—which he claimed was not new at all.

The two Swiss members of the international Everest expedition, Yvette

Vaucher and her husband Michel, were among the four dissidents who abandoned the expedition. The background to their sudden step was the unexpected difficulties faced by the Expedition. It had planned to attack Mount Everest on two fronts—the south-west face and the west ridge. The climb on the south-west face was to be a fantastic world premier. It was however hindered by a ten-day long blizzard and extraordinary difficulties which prompted the Swiss-Canadian leader of the expedition, Norman G. Dyhrenfurth, to abandon the efforts on the west ridge and concentrate on the hitherto unscaled south-west face. But the Vaucher couple, together with the mountaineers Pierre Mazeaud and Carlo Ponti, who were making for the summit on the west ridge, were peeved by this decision. This change of plan changed their role in the expedition. Not being destined for the summit anymore, they were left to contribute to the success of those who were. In their words, they were treated as "porters" by the Japanese and the Anglo-Saxons. They left by helicopter for Katmandu, promising themselves to stage an "explosive press conference", which unfortunately had not been reported at the time of writing. Pierre Mazeaud accused the organisers of the expedition of preventing them from reaching the summit, because the feat of a female Everest premier would have deprived them of their glory. And the expedition leaders accused Mazeaud of sabotaging the venture when they were shorn of the glory and popularity of reaching the summit—which they were sure to do anyway.

A conference on bovine breeding was held in Bulle, Fribourg. Among the developments reported, the most revolutionary from a Swiss agricultural point of view was the successful crossing of the brindled Simmenthal cow, which constitutes two-thirds of Fribourg's cattle, with a Canadian breed, the "Red Holstein". The Swiss agri-

cultural authorities, intent on keeping the Simmenthal breed "pure", needed all the persuasion of two agronomical engineers from Fribourg who had worked in America, to allow the experiment to be made on a very limited scale. It was to be undertaken on 2,000 cows for four years under the supervision of Professor Loertscher from the Zurich Institute of Technology. The farmers of Fribourg are in general demanding more freedom to import the sperm of the best Canadian bulls, with the expectation of accelerated precocity, more milk output and better aptitude for the milking machine.

The psychologists will need all their science to probe in the tormented mind of Mr. Fernand Mueller, who owns the sauna at 116 Minervastrasse, Zurich, and who, after having held the secretary for social services of the Austrian Consulate captive for three days and barricaded himself for a further two surrendered to the police on the entreaty of his wife. He had threatened to blow up the building with 30 kilos of explosives and 500 litres of petrol. It turned out to be a bluff. He had demanded a safe-conduct to France for himself and his family and the authorities had arranged to give him a passport. According to his declarations to the Press, his act was a parade to make the world know of the misery inflicted on him by the whole system and by life.

The Federal Council reacted promptly to the German decision to allow the Mark to float. Using the powers recently given to it by Parliament to change the parity of the franc if necessary, it decided to revalue the franc by 7 per cent. The Swiss franc was an undervalued currency, and with the pressure on the Mark now relieved, holders of foreign currencies would storm in for Swiss francs as long as they could hope for revaluation. Mr. Nelio Celio, Head of the Finance Department, explained that his surprise revaluation was precisely intended to forestall such situations.

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