

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1971)

Heft: 1619

Rubrik: Swiss news

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 03.04.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

ing rapidly thrown out of a job.

Studies are becoming less of a road to an easy life. This fact will probably ease the pressure on the universities and one day de-mythicise higher education. However the Lausanne Plan does not apply to higher education only and would therefore not necessarily foster the creation of a class of supernumary intellectuals. Anybody aged over twenty who studies is intended to get a loan indiscriminately. There is not only social justice behind this, but a students pride as well. A young man is adult at the age of twenty and he should therefore not have to rely on his parents for protection any longer. Instead of being dependant on mum and dad, he is now to get the backing of a public bank financed by tax-payers money (namely mum and dad's money).

He will naturally have to pay it back, but on easy terms and at a time when (with inflation aiding) it won't be a sacrifice for his standard of living. The scheme is certainly acceptable economically, but it is a falacy to believe that it will help to promote early manhood, financial weaning and responsibility. It is more of an easy way out for students and will serve, in a way, to diminish family ties. Indeed, the majority of families who can afford it are willing to help their children through higher education, and even to make sacrifices. With the Lausanne Plan and universal grants, which amounts to the same short-term financial situation, students won't owe anything to their parents any more and this will be an additional element breaking the family bond. A man will be deprived of the incentive of making money for his children. This may seem trivial, but nonetheless touches on the fabric of society.

In working class families children leave home at an early age to serve an apprenticeship. They earn their keep and soon become the economic peers of their parents, and this at an age when middle-class young men enter university. The family relationship, is therefore, different in both cases. Now, the formerly pampered middle-class boy will be able to free himself from the economic embrace of his family and become a free man by means of a public loan. A free man however without being the economic equal of his father.

Again, this is perhaps not a bad thing, but it will tend to break the pattern of the middle-class family. It will also tend to break the personal incentive to fight for a place in the sun. Whether grants are distributed to all or not, the boy who *wants* to study to get somewhere always finds the means to do so, and he is the more likely to make the best use of his university education.

(PMB)

SWISS NEWS

MR. GRABER UNDER FIRE

Mr. Pierre Graber, the Foreign Minister, decided at the beginning of the year to be assisted by two new committees on international affairs. The idea was his and so was the initiative. One group was to be a consultative commission on foreign political matters. The other, called the information group, was to further the understanding among Swiss people of the aims and options of our foreign policy.

As it were, Mr. Graber felt that the responsibilities of steering the course of a nation was too great for a man to assume without expert guidance. Thus he created his think-tank on foreign affairs with the privilege of advising the Federal Council. He was strongly criticised for doing so because the National Council and the Council of State have their own commission on foreign affairs. Mr. Graber's improvisation would, in the minds of many parliamentarians, duplicate the work of this joint commission.

What was particularly unacceptable was that the consultative commission on foreign affairs had seven Members of Parliament—the leading representatives from the main parties in fact. Thus Mr. Graber had chosen Mr. André Chevallaz and Mr. Olivier Reverdin, leading figures of French-speaking Switzerland and old political friends. There were jealousies and a widespread feeling that by having members of the National Council and the Council of State this commission would definitely usurp the role of the foreign political commission of the two councils.

Mr. Graber had to accede to the demands of the National Council and replace seven parliamentarians by seven senior citizens. He was also criticised for the advanced age and conservatism of his choice of members. Why weren't there any women, why weren't there any youth? To the latter point Mr. Graber replied flatly that there was no point in appealing to "born dissenters" since they would only make him lose his time.

He was also attacked for the vague meaning and the undefined membership of his "information group". He was most strongly criticised for having asked one of his personal friends, Mr. Roger Nordmann, to sit with his second team and accused of nepotism. Mr. Gilbert Baechtold, a Socialist from Vaud, was the most violent opponent to these schemes and wanted to know why the decision was taken precipitately. He further pointed out the incompetence of the men chosen to sit at these commissions and doubted that they could

carry out a serious "prospective" study of foreign policy. Mr. Graber invoked the 104th Article of the Constitution which entitled the Federal Council to call on experts for special issues.

He said that his two groups were not without precedent, since a permanent economic delegation had been instituted after the war, and the *Historische Standortbestimmung*, also an advisory group, had been created in 1961 to examine the problems facing Switzerland in Europe. He assured Mr. Baechtold that neither of these two study groups had ever interfered with the responsibility of the foreign political commission of Parliament and that the Federal Council would continue to submit to it all matters within Parliament's competence.

THE FALL OF A FINANCIAL WIZARD

Ten years ago a 49-year-old Argentinian whose name remains undisclosed settled down in Lausanne and created a company with a million-franc capital, set up six foreign subsidiaries, and launched gigantic operations with the help of Western Swiss firms, amassing a fortune in wheat trading during the Suez crisis and other lucrative operations, and finally attained a turnover of several hundred million francs.

His offices occupied several storeys of a Lausanne block, his general secretariat and three services employed approximately a hundred people. He hired Italian, Egyptian and Arab specialists, paying them up to 25,000 francs a month plus emoluments of 5,000 dollars and open credits in the large shops. He was an old friend of Juan Peron and was on intimate terms with the King of Morocco. He knew Nasser and the President of Mexico. He professed that fastuous living was a condition for international business success. He owned cars, collections of electric trains, tin soldier armies and gave presents costing 50,000 dollars.

Unfortunately, although he had a genius for business, he didn't have one for management. He eventually confused his personal funds with those of his company, without however breaking the law. His fall was precipitated by the elopement of his wife with one of his former collaborators, leaving him with the care of his eight children. He neglected his accounts and lost control of his affairs. Bankruptcy was soon to follow, with liabilities of 11 million francs.

The Argentinian left his own fortune of 20 million francs in the adventure, including the former villa of the King of Belgium which he had bought for 600,000 francs and which is now worth three million. But to know the



SWISS BANK CORPORATION

(a Company limited by shares, incorporated in Switzerland)

Principal London Office

99 GRESHAM STREET,
P.O. Box No. 114,
LONDON EC2P 2BR
Tel. 01-606 4000

West End Branch

SWISS CENTRE,
1 NEW COVENTRY STREET,
LONDON W1V 8BR
Tel. 01-734 0767

(Savings Account facilities available)

SOCIÉTÉ DE BANQUE SUISSE
SCHWEIZERISCHER BANKVEREIN
SOCIETÀ DI BANCA SVIZZERA

Offices throughout Switzerland
in New York and San Francisco

MAT *Transport*

The Professionals

Head Office: Arnold House, 36/41 Holywell Lane, London, E.C.2

Telephone: 01-247 6500

Telex: 883225/886384

Allied Houses: MAT TRANSPORT A.G. BASLE — ZURICH

exact situation of his company it will be necessary to run through 30 cubic metres of documents. He escaped from Switzerland in 1969 with a small suitcase as his only possession. Convicted of bankruptcy, failure to keep his books in order and infringement of Old Age Pension regulations, he has been sentenced, in his absence, to six months imprisonment with three years remission.

(ATS)

A BASLE ADVERTISER BANNED IN FRANCE

The French authorities have banned the distribution of the foreign edition of the *Baslerstab*, an advertising publication distributed free in Alsace since 1966. The copies of the daily edition are also being confiscated from border workers by the French customs. The authorities of the neighbouring town of Saint Louis have explained that this move, based on an official decree of 1945, was a result of complaints by French firms on the prejudice the paper was having on the local economy by enticing Frenchmen with highly paid jobs in the Basle area.

(ATS)

A RATHER STRANGE AFFAIR

A company specialising in buying films with their rights and leasing them to television networks across the world, is claiming several hundred million dollars outstanding from Egyptian television.

The company is *CineTelevision*, an organisation based in Vaduz, Liechtenstein. Between 1963 and 1966 it had leased 8,300 films to Egyptian television. The company claims that 3,000 of the films have not been sent back, that 2,000 are still in the hands of Egyptian Television, that a thousand or more have been sub-leased to other Arab televisions in breach of contract and with a loss of revenue to the company estimated at 276 million dollars. A gentleman's agreement had been reached in 1966 on the modalities of payment. Egyptian television was to pay for the rental of the films into the account of a major Swiss

bank with the Egyptian National Bank.

However, only part of the dues were paid in and the chairman of CineTelevision, Mr. Ody, was informed by the Egyptian Embassy in Paris in 1969 that it was impossible to allow such important amounts of foreign currency out of Egypt. Mr. Ody claims however that the order to block the funds was falsified by a forged stamp from the Egyptian Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, the money in the Swiss bank account seems to have mysteriously disappeared.

An enquiry into this matter had already begun in Egypt in the days of President Nasser. It was believed over there that senior officers of the regime had been involved in this embezzlement. Mr. Ody believes, for his part, that the money was stolen with the help of the forged signature of the deputy manager of the Swiss bank into whose account with the National Bank of Egypt the dues of CineTelevision had to be paid. Furthermore, the duplication of the company's seal had permitted the illegal distribution of a thousand films to other Arab countries.

CineTelevision had considered seeking the sequestration of an United Arab Airline aircraft in Switzerland last year. This move was legally possible since Egypt is one of the only countries which had not signed an international convention banning the sequestration of airliners as a means of settlement of unsatisfied claims. Mr. Ody, who says that his family have been the victims of mysterious threats, has instead resorted to demanding the sequestration of 100 million francs of Egyptian assets held in Swiss banks. Legal proceedings have begun in Geneva.

HOW THEY PAY THEIR TEACHERS

Following a recent pay increase for the teaching staff in the Canton of Geneva, the earnings of teachers in Geneva are the highest in Switzerland after those of Zurich. It is instructive for the purpose of comparison with other countries to review what the various grades of salaries are at present.

Kindergarten teachers earn 10,700 francs a year after three years of service. Primary school teachers earn 12,550 francs after the same period. Teachers (male and female) working in the primary classes of cantonal schools earn 22,500 francs with 12 yearly increases of 660 francs from the date of their employment, their final salary being 30,420 francs. Teachers with special subjects such as art, physical training, music and manual work, get 19,180 francs a year with yearly increases of 620 francs, bringing final earnings to 27,250 francs.

Needlework mistresses start at the same salary and end at 26,250 francs. Teachers with a university degree and a certificate enabling them to teach in secondary schools now start at 27,970 francs with yearly increases raising their earnings to 37,150 francs after 12 years.

Secondary school teachers in special disciplines start at 25,180 francs and reach 30,800 francs after 12 years. Gym teachers get 33,410 francs after the same period of employment. The teachers of Geneva were near to staging a strike some months ago to obtain these substantial improvements, which will cost the coffers of Geneva an extra 13.3 million francs a year.

THE POLICE ARE NOT ALWAYS GENTLE

The 35-year-old works manager of a Geneva firm fell asleep in his parked car in Basle during the night. A passing patrol car stopped and its occupants, suspecting that the man was in a state of extreme drunkenness and unfit to drive, woke him up. They noticed that the bonnet of his car was still warm, thus deducing that it had been used and that their suspicions were justified.

They asked the man "where he was". He answered "at home", with the belief or the pretence that one's personal car was like one's home and inviolable without a warrant. The police interpreted this statement as conclusive proof of the man's state of drunkenness and ordered him to come with them to the police station. He flatly refused, telling them he would

Telegrams and Cables : TRANCOSMOS LONDON

TELEX: 24777

Telephone : 01-407 4433 (8 Lines)

COSMOS FREIGHTWAYS AGENCY LIMITED.

INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT FORWARDERS

By Road, Rail, Sea and Air

1, CATHEDRAL STREET,
LONDON BRIDGE, LONDON, S.E.1.

REGULAR GROUPAGE SERVICES WITH

SWITZERLAND

ANGLO-SWISS CUSTOMS EXPERTS.

OFFICIAL FREIGHT AND
PASSENGER AGENTS FOR
SWISSAIR AND ALL AIR LINES
TO SWITZERLAND AND ALL
PARTS OF THE WORLD

ALSO AT
LIVERPOOL, MANCHESTER,
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE
HULL, BRISTOL, CARDIFF,
SWANSEA, NEWPORT, Mon.,
GLASGOW.

CONNECTED
THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD

Agents: WELTIFURRER INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT CO. Ltd., Zurich, Basle, Schaffhausen, Geneva, St. Gal.

The average tourist will drop 2.5 pairs of gloves during the season!

So it's as well that the Swiss invented Velcro touch and close fastener. A couple of inches sewn to the outside of ski pants and you've a handy place to park your gloves whilst you reach for your ticket.

it's better with
VELCRO
touch and close fastener



Write for sample length to
Selectus Limited, BIDDULPH, Stoke-on-Trent.
Tel. Biddulph 3316

**I've always had
a straight
answer
from the
Union Bank
of Switzerland**



UNION BANK OF SWITZERLAND

SCHWEIZERISCHE BANKGESELLSCHAFT
UNION DE BANQUES SUISSES
UNIONE DI BANCHE SVIZZERE

117 Old Broad Street, London, E. C. 2



Swiss Life

INSURANCE AND PENSION COMPANY
(Incorporated with limited liability in Zurich Switzerland)

Mutual Company—Established 1857

**ASSETS EXCEED
£500 MILLIONS**

24 Cheapside, London E.C.2.
Telephone: 01-236 3171

Head Office: SCHWEIZERISCHE LEBENSVERSICHERUNGS-UND RENTENANSTALT, ZURICH.

RENTENANSTALT

specialises in Pension Plans for
International Companies with the

MASTER COVER CONTRACT

and offers in Great Britain all types of
life assurance and annuities.

30 Exchange Street East, Liverpool L2 3QB
Telephone: 051-236 6712

not budge until he was professionally informed of his rights.

Thereupon the police became heavy handed. They broke the man's obstinacy by spraying his face with tear gas. A scuffle broke out. The man screamed. The policemen, alarmed by the risk of waking the whole neighbourhood, threw him in their car. He was kept in a cell for four hours after initially refusing to take a breathalyser. He was later charged with drunken driving and refusal of police orders. The results of the breath test were not made public and no one yet knows how badly this victim of police expediency was drunk.

It is easy enough to reach the 0.8 per cent limit of blood/alcohol content. The man explained later that he had been suffering from spine trouble and that this had been the reason for having limped upon his arrest, a further circumstance attributed to drunkenness by the police. This pain in his spine prevented him from sleeping and his misadventurous nap in a car had been his first rest for weeks. After his mishandling by the police he had refused to take the breath test. He has now lodged a complaint and the affair is no longer in the hands of the police.

Another case where a civilian resorted to suing the police began during a demonstration in Geneva by the supporters of the "Autonomous Youth Centre". A few newsmen found themselves between the police and the demonstrators when the former decided to charge. Despite an armband indicating that he was from the Press, a photographer was bludgeoned in the ear and received an open wound in the eyebrow. Failing to receive any apologies from the police he decided to settle his complaint with the help of the law.

THE MISERY OF SWISS TENNIS

The Swiss tennis champion is a Rumanian called Dmitri Sturdza. He failed to qualify for the Wimbledon men's singles this year. Wimbledon is an open championship but nonetheless requires minimal qualifications. They are recorded in the organisation's accountancy of performances or obtained in qualifying rounds before the tournament. Sturdza came last year but was promptly beaten in the first round. He left without fighting the doubles and consolation matches very much disgusted with his performance. It hasn't improved during the year.

His occupation as the head salesman for a special air-tight plastic box sold by mail order didn't help him in this way. He was accepted this year for the doubles and played with a fellow Rumanian P. Marmureanu against the veterans Frank Sedgman and R. Howe, both Australians, and lost 6-3, 8-9, 9-7.

The Swiss are interested in tennis and many tournaments are played there (in particular the forthcoming World Championship Tennis matches at Gstaad) but it remains for Swiss players to rise to the level of international tennis.

FINAL REPORT ON THE 55th SWISS INDUSTRIES FAIR IN BASLE

The 55th Swiss Industries Fair in Basle, which closed its doors on 27th April was again able to register a remarkable success. In practically all trade groups business at the fair was said to be good to very good; the sales negotiations that were instigated promise successful post-fair business for many exhibitors.

A prominent feature of this year's fair was once again the great stream of foreign visitors. They came from a total of 122 countries, whereby all continents were represented. The gratifyingly high total number of admissions of more than one million, is evidence of the undeviating interest shown in the Swiss Industries Fair.

The course of business in the toys and camping group, in which for the first time also foreign products were admitted among the exhibits, was awaited with great attention. In these groups the exhibitors' expectations were more than met; considerable increases in turnover were achieved in both groups.

The great majority of exhibitors at the Watch Fair expressed great satisfaction with the business done. The great significance attributed to the Watch Fair as a market event for the trade, is shown, among other things, by the fact that, as a result of increasing demand for exhibition space, a renewed extension of the Watch Fair must be considered, probably in the near future.

The exhibitors at the Construction Fair were also satisfied; the close

concentration of the exhibits in five halls was to the advantage of all the exhibiting firms.

In the consumer goods sector business was normal; in particular, interest in new products launched by the foodstuffs industry was very promising. The power of attraction of the textile groups with their special displays, as well as the exhibits of the shoe, furniture and household goods groups, was as strong as ever.

A success, which in the course of the year will certainly be echoed by further business transactions, was also achieved by the transport group with its impressive range of large vehicles, etc.

The 1st Swiss Inventors Show which was held within the framework of the fair, can be considered as a marked success; numerous contacts were made for the evaluation of the exhibited inventions.

The 56th Swiss Industries Fair will take place from 15th to 25th April, 1972.

IN SWITZERLAND, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZE CONCERNS STILL PREDOMINATE

The latest industrial statistics confirm the important role played in Switzerland by small and medium-size concerns. If this group is considered as made up of all firms with fewer than one hundred employees, it immediately becomes obvious that they are by far the most numerous. The overall average for the whole of the country and all industrial sectors amounted last year to 74 employees per firm. The big firms are grouped mainly in certain branches, like chemicals where the average number of employees works out at 149. The machinery, instruments and vehicle industry undoubtedly has a large number of small concerns; however, owing to the existence of a certain number of very big factories, the average (122) is still greater than the limit of 100. This limit is not

THE ZURICH GROUP

ZURICH INSURANCE COMPANY
(a limited Company incorporated in Switzerland in 1872)

THE BEDFORD LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY LTD.
(an associate member of the Life Offices Association)

THE BEDFORD GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.
(a member of the British Insurance Association)

UNDERTAKE ALL
CLASSES OF INSURANCE
BRANCHES THROUGHOUT THE U.K.

HEAD OFFICE:
FAIRFAX HOUSE, FULWOOD PLACE
HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1£

Telephone 01-242 8833

GROUP RESOURCES EXCEED £500,000,000

reached in tobacco (average 95 employees), the paper industry (92), textiles (83) and food products (78). Those below the general average are metallurgy (71), beverages (64), watchmaking (62), stones and clays, as well as rubber and synthetics (54), graphic arts (53), the clothing industry (51), the leather, timber and cork industries (30). These figures are interesting because they prove that our country owes its prosperity to the activities of firms varying greatly in size, many of which though modest in appearance nevertheless make a big contribution to the fame of Swiss products all over the world.

(OSEC)

BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

Swiss tobacco manufacturers *Rinsoz & Ormond Co. Ltd.* (Vevey) are playing a big part in the creation of the Ivory Coast Tobacco Company (SITAB) at Abidjan whose capital is at the same time Ivory Coast, French and Swiss. SITAB, which will manufacture and market many makes of cigars, cigarettes and pipe tobaccos, will also undertake big projects in the field of tobacco growing in the Ivory Coast. The future annual turnover may be estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 4 billion CFA francs, over two billion of which will be paid out in taxes of one kind or another.

The State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Science and Technology has authorised CIBA-GEIGY CO. LTD. to open an official agency in Moscow called "*Ciba-Geigy Co. Ltd. Agency in Moscow*". This authorisation is designed to simplify scientific and technological co-operation between the State Committee of the USSR Ministry for Science and Technology and the Swiss group. This agreement was confirmed on 20th January, 1971. The Basle chemical group thus becomes the first Swiss firm to be officially accredited in Moscow.

In 1970, the three *Swiss aluminium factories* achieved a total output of some 91,000 tons. Compared with the previous year, this represents an increase of 13,000 tons, i.e. about 18%; this result has been made possible by the increased capacity of the Steg works (Alusuisse). Domestic sales of aluminium increased last year, the biggest consumer of aluminium being the building trade, with a share of 26.3%. Close behind come the "engineering works" and "packaging" groups with 20.8% and 19.5% respectively. In addition, the electrical equipment industry accounted for 8.6% of the output, the "transport" group 7.2%, household and office equipment 4.6% and finally all the other consumers 13%.

At the Casablanca International Fair, the Swiss Office for the Develop-

ment of Trade presented to the public for the first time a *new audio-visual show "Presenting Switzerland"*. This series, composed of several hundred colour slides, made by some of Switzerland's best photographers, is projected simultaneously onto 4 screens, by means of an electronically controlled multi-projection apparatus. In a quarter of an hour, the foreign spectators at the show thus have an opportunity of seeing various features of Switzerland (geography, population,

economy, culture, politics, etc.) and getting to know some of the problems this country has to face. This new multivision show completes the series of 960 slides "Glimpses of Switzerland" presented with such tremendous success to over a million visitors at fairs in Bucharest, Moscow, Johannesburg, Tel Aviv, Bogota and Zagreb. These two series, ideally suited to our visual civilisation, will help to enhance Switzerland's image abroad.

(OSEC)



**G.T. WHYTE
& COMPANY
LIMITED**

MERCHANT BANKERS

All domestic and international banking transactions—including:—

- ★ Company and Investment Management
- ★ Corporate Finance
- ★ Capital Issues
- ★ Documentary Credits
- ★ Discounting of Trade Bills (including East European and South American)
- ★ All types of Export Finance and advisory services
- ★ Clearing, Barter and Compensation Trading
- ★ Blocked Currencies

**3 COPTHALL COURT,
LONDON, E.C.2.**

Tel : 01-606 0381 Telex 884851 Telegrams Whytebank London E.C.2.

Member of the Triumph Investment Trust group