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it entrusted with the task of co-ordination but has the right to take over if the Cantons do not live up to the provisions of the law.

Chapter II provides general instructions relating to the prevention of pollution. In this connection, however, the two houses reached slightly different conclusions, and a few points will have to be clarified during the current parliamentary session. Here, in short, are the principal decisions:

It is illegal to introduce directly or indirectly into the water any kind of substances (solid, liquid, gaseous) which might cause pollution. Ducts and seepage responsible for pollution will have to be eliminated within a maximum of 10 years. Building permits will only be issued in zones where satisfactory sewerage is guaranteed.

An important point (one of those which require clarification) is the possible prohibition of the manufacture and sale of products that cannot be eliminated adequately (this pertains notably to all phosphate-containing detergents).

One of the most controversial issues is the liability clause of the law, particularly Article 34, which needs further clarification. As originally presented to Parliament, Article 34 stated:

“Wer durch Betrieb, seine Anlagen oder durch seine Handlungen oder Unterlassungen ein Gewässer verunreinigt, haftet für den dadurch entstandenen Schaden”. This would mean that the law applied to anybody who causes water pollution, regardless of “guilt”. This statement, as could be expected, has given rise to long discussions and criticism. Whereas the motorist carries compulsory liability insurance, the owner or manager of a plant or home does not have such coverage. While it might be possible to collect for damages from a large enterprise, it is doubtful that the same would apply to private persons, as the extent of the liability may be staggering. Furthermore, it must be determined how the Cantons and the Confederation can be held responsible.

The “Nationalrat” advocated a less strict version of Article 34, giving some consideration to the notion of guilt. However, this recommendation was rejected by both the “Ständerat-Kommission” and the “Ständerat” itself at its second reading of the law. It appears possible that this time the Nationalrat might concur.

The penalties for infringements are quite high: in cases of neglect, they provide for fines of up to 20,000 Swiss Francs and prison terms of up to six months. In view of the complexity of the problem, its relationship to other issues equally important to the country, it seems that one of the great difficulties will be the enforcement of the law.

(*Bulletin of the Swiss Embassy in Washington*)

TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC ITEMS by courtesy of OSEC

THIRD INTERNATIONAL MECHANICAL HANDLING FAIR

Continually increased output through rationalisation is a matter of vital importance for economic progress. Modern technology makes possible considerable improvements in the rationalisation of transport both inside and outside firms as well as of reloading, trans-shipment and storage; in industry, mechanical handling appliances save money and labour; they are also useful to transport firms, shops and even craft-workers. Owing to the vast range of appliances available both in Switzerland and abroad, it has become increasingly difficult of recent years to gain an overall picture of the market, make comparisons and choose the most suitable equipment for any given job. Only a specialised trade fair offers such opportunities. The Third International Mechanical Handling Fair will be held in Basle from 3rd to 12th February, 1972. The first two fairs, held in 1966 and 1968, showed clearly that this type of event answers a very definite need.

A SWISS INVENTOR TO THE AID OF MOTORISTS

A Lausanne firm (Vaud, Switzerland) won a gold medal at the last International Inventors Exhibition in Brussels, for its presentation of an ingenious remote-controlled sump-plug, avoiding any need for a lift, pit or dirty work. This small device, called “Cédimatic”, is inserted in place of the original sump-plug; it is opened from a distance by means of a cable with handle, thus enabling the motorist to change the oil of his car himself, or save precious time by having his oil changed at the petrol station while filling up with petrol. Apart from the fact that this also cuts out the need to make an appointment with one's garage, or immobilise one's car for an inconvenient length of time, this device helps motorists comply with the recommendations of automobile manufacturers and oil producers, who advise changing the oil while still warm, so as to ensure proper drainage of the sump and complete removal of the acids that are harmful to the engine.

PROCEEDS FROM TAXES IN SWITZERLAND

In Switzerland, the total proceeds from taxation have trebled within a period of 10 years, while the proportion of taxation in the gross national product has increased by about a third during the same period. The taxes lev-

ied by the government in 1969 totalled 14,424 million francs, i.e. 17.9 per cent of Switzerland's gross national product. Ten years earlier, this proportion amounted to only 14.5 per cent. Cantonal taxes have increased the most. Totalling 23.96 billion in 1969, they accounted for 30.5 per cent of Switzerland's total tax receipts as opposed to 27.7 per cent in 1959. The figure for the proportion of communal taxes remained practically the same: 25.5 per cent (36,79 billion) in 1969. This trend has had an effect on the apportionment of the total proceeds from taxation according to the various types of tax. There is in fact a falling off in the amount of indirect taxes in favour of direct taxes: whereas income tax and capital levy as a whole in 1959 accounted for 62.7 per cent of the total receipts from taxation, the proportion increased considerably during recent years, amounting in 1969 to 65.2 per cent, i.e. a level not reached since 1946. On the other hand, the part played by taxes on consumption in the total figures amounted only to 34.8 per cent in 1969 as compared with 37.3 per cent in 1959. It is the first time this figure has been less than 35 per cent since the end of the second world war.

WHERE THE SWISS GO

According to the Federal Aliens Police, Swiss emigration has been on the increase again. On January 1, 1971, there were 311,392 Swiss registered with their consular representations, compared to 308,172 at the beginning of 1970. During this year, 18,322 Swiss left their country or “Heimat” as they are wont to think of it, once they have cleared the frontier. On the other hand, 15,000 compatriots have returned.

The emigrants come from all walks of life. Two-thirds left in order to work, but one-fifth belonged to the “professions”. No more danger of brain drain!

The preferred destination of the Swiss sounds somewhat like a political or cultural programme. The countries of their choice are headed by Germany, South Africa, Canada, Australia, followed by Great Britain, Spain, Austria and the Netherlands. For the first time again, an increasing number went to France and Italy. On the other hand, emigration to Latin America has almost come to a standstill—with the exception of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. New Zealand, another popular destination, evens out with an equal number of Swiss emigrating and returning, the United States shows a slightly negative balance which has not occurred for years.

NEW SWISS ELECTRONIC APPLIANCES

At the Interkama trade fair recently held in Dusseldorf, a Swiss firm from Niederteufen (Appenzell), specialising in the manufacture of electronic machinery, presented its latest products to the public. Among the many new appliances displayed by this firm, special attention should be called to a new justifying tape perforator for typesetting (books and newspapers), the GSA 702. This perforator introduces the advantages of automated typesetting to small composing rooms where a computer system is not economically justified; it enables medium-size printing works therefore to remain competitive for an outlay equivalent to the price of a conventional counting keyboard. The larger concerns are bound to appreciate its ability to produce justified tape ready for immediate casting. The GSA 702 will also enable them to solve typesetting problems not calling for the use of a big computer, in particular when the operator has to modify the typographic set-up of a page, an operation that can be absolutely vital in advertising for example.

SWITZERLAND AND THE BIG METHANE GAS TANKERS

During the last 10 years, the transport of liquid gas has grown considerably. The capacity of methane gas tankers has risen steadily and it is estimated that by 1980 world supplies of liquid natural gas will average some 170 million cu.m. per day, i.e. about

60 billion cu.m. a year. Switzerland, together with the big maritime nations, is also playing a part in the technical development of methane gas tankers. Sulzer Bros. Co. Ltd., at Winterthur, has perfected the prototype of a marine engine running on two fuels, which has been installed in a Norwegian ship. The methane gas tanker built by Moos Waerft, for Smedvig Rederi at Stavanger, is also a prototype designed for the transport of liquid natural gas and all types of gas (butane, acetylene, etc.). The engine built by Sulzer is designed to run on any gas, provided the pilot fuel is rational diesel oil. A polyvalent ship of this kind allows full use of its loading capacity on both outward and return trips.

corporated either directly during creaming, or diluted in water when flour is added to the mass. As it is extremely fine, "Villac" needs no sifting and spreads evenly throughout the dough, preventing the appearance of marks on the finished biscuits. While considerably helping the dough to rise, this substitute also possesses the advantage of turning biscuits a lovely golden colour. In addition, "Villac" represents a considerable saving, since one pound of it is equivalent to three pounds of powdered milk.

IN SWITZERLAND, 2,500 CIGARETTES PER MINUTE

The Swiss cigarette industry has a fully automatic production plant, operated by a single worker, that can produce 2,500 filter-tip cigarettes a minute. This output is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times larger than that obtained between the two world wars with a plant operated by three workers. In the early days of the cigarette industry, a workman required practically a whole 10-hours day to achieve an output equivalent to that achieved by his colleague today in one minute. The investment per work point amounts today to some S.Fr. 400,000 compared with S.Fr. 13,300 between the two wars and S.Fr. 5,000 only when the first cigarette-making machines were introduced between 1900 and 1918. In 1970, the Swiss cigarette industry produced a total of some 30 billion cigarettes. Thanks to its tremendous work of rationalisation and automation, it has increased its annual output more than seven-fold compared with 1948.

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