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# SWISS EVENTS

## FEDERAL

### Switzerland closer to Sweden than to Austria

Sweden is the only country with which Switzerland has a fair degree of military co-operation. For several years, they have been involved in a number of joint development projects, in particular, anti-tank rockets, anti-aircraft systems and theoretical studies.

According to General Carl-Eric Almgren, one of Sweden's defence chiefs, the two countries also share similar defence conceptions. General Almgren visited Switzerland in early May and stressed in a press conference held in Berne the close analogy between military solutions adopted by their respective general staffs. He said that owing to this understanding, Sweden's relations with Switzerland were considerably closer than with Austria, another neutral country.

### Protection of tenants

A special committee of Councillors of State reviewing a draft Government decree for the protection of tenants has softened several of its original provisions. Sitting in the presence of Mr. Ernst Brugger, Head of the Department of Public Economy, who drafted the decree, the Councillors of State decided to extend the variety of cases where rent increases can be deemed "not abusive". They spelled out the principle that in general, "rent increases are justified when their purpose is solely to maintain the buying power of the capital subjected to risk". The Committee admitted that risk capital amounts to about 40 per cent of the investments of a new building.

Other changes recommended by the Committee included a reduction from 30 to 10 days of the time during which a new tenant can complain about his lease to the rent conciliatory commission. The State Councillors also rejected the Federal Council's suggestion that tenants should be able to call for an alteration of indexed rents for leases of over five years. "A contract is a contract" remarked one of them.

The new arrangements will be backdated to 5th March, 1972, when the Swiss people voted on a new constitutional article on housing.

The other points of the Government package were left unchanged. They provided, in particular, for loan

facilities for deposits for sufficient notices of rent increases and defined the cases where a landlord is forbidden to increase his rent. The implementation of the new provisions will belong to the Cantons, which are entitled to take action against landlords who ignore them.

The problem of rents has a great impact on Swiss life. First, because the great majority of the population are tenants and do not own houses. Secondly, because rents have increased much faster than the cost of living. In Geneva, the cost of living has grown by 26.5 per cent between 1966 and 1971, whereas rents have soared by 56 per cent.

A new movement called "*Fédération Romande des Locataires*" has been formed in Lausanne to counter these developments. Its Secretary is Mr. Jean Quéloz, President of the *Mouvement Populaire des Familles*. He told a Press conference that the new organisation will spearhead the fight against excessive rents in Western Switzerland. It will demand recognition as a speaking partner from the Federal Council and expects to be consulted on the planned housing reforms.

### The "right to education"

The 27th Article of the Federal Constitution on school education will be revised and set forth the principle of the "right to education", said Mr. Hans Peter Tschudi, Head of the Department of the Interior, at the Annual Assembly of the Association for School and Professional Guidance.

According to Mr. Tschudi, the present provisions of the Constitution on education are outdated. He said that the right to professional education and knowledge was by no means accepted as obvious in Switzerland. He said that it was laid down in several foreign constitutions, but that it was not a recognised tradition in Switzerland. The new article will spell out the fundamental right of everyone to knowledge: "Each citizen has the right to be trained to a job adapted to his abilities". Mr. Tschudi said that the new Article will also include provisions on research.

The necessity of revising the constitution in this field had become particularly apparent after the recent popular initiative launched by the Agrarian Party in favour of school co-ordination.

Mr. Tschudi also touched on the subject of the Confederation's responsibility in education and stressed the necessity of a more centred and co-ordinated Swiss system.

## Aid to the Press

Parliament will presently be called to review the means of assisting the Swiss Press, which like the Press of other developed countries, has suffered considerably in the past from the competition of other news media. The Swiss Press is in the particular predicament of being extremely fragmented. There are over 340 dailies for a population of 6 million. Many small newspapers have disappeared, but the resilience of the Swiss Press is quite surprising in view of the tininess of so many publications. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* pointed out in a recent article that "small circulation" didn't necessarily imply "poor returns". It cited the example of the *Linth*, a very small local leaf, which was paying its way much better than the *Arbeiter Zeitung* (AZ) chain of regional newspapers.

The financial survival of such a fragmented Press is at present mainly due to the healthy state of the economy and hence, to considerable orders for commercial and classified advertising. Yet journalists have recently been awarded substantial pay rises which have taxed the resources of the publishers. One consequence is that most important papers have drastically cut their reliance on outside contributors.

One measure which will affect the press considerably is a planned increase of postage rates for newspapers. This has been demanded by the Post Office as one of the ways to reduce its yearly loss. The Federal Council has already proposed a series of increases applying to publications of various weights. The recommended scale was reviewed by the Council of States, which suggested slight reductions, and was then examined by the Commission of the National Council, which recommended postage increases far higher than those originally suggested by the Government.

The increases recommended by the Commission are particularly high for publications weighing more than 150 grams. For these, the rise would be a minimum of 10 cents. Rates for newspapers weighing between 200 and 250 grams would go up by 15 cents, and for weights varying from 250 to 500 grams, by 35 cents. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* commented that the new postal tariffs would penalise such commercially successful newspapers as the *Tages Anzeiger*, whose high standard is generally recognised, whereas it would only marginally affect such tabloids as *Blick*. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* asks whether it is correct to penalise commercial success, inasmuch as this usually goes hand in hand with

an extra number of pages, and demands that an in-depth study of the Swiss Press should be made before any selective measure of support is decided.

#### **The Swiss people to be consulted on the E.E.C.**

Speaking before a Jurassian association, Federal Councillor Pierre Graber announced that the country would be called to the polls, probably in December, to express its support to the Swiss-Common Market free trade agreements. These agreements are not yet finalised, said Mr. Graber. They will lead to a gradual reduction of tariffs on industrial goods between Switzerland and the E.E.C. By 1977, trade in these goods should have become entirely free of custom duties.

Although the Constitution does not bind the Government to call a vote on this issue, Mr. Graber said that the Swiss people would be asked to ratify any treaty of importance to the future of the country.

#### **The Second Pillar**

The expression the "Three Pillars" has been popularised for the past two or three years. It refers to the three sources of income possibly available to a retired person. First, there is the

universally shared and official Old Age Pension. Secondly, a retired wage earner can enjoy the benefits of a private pension scheme. Thirdly, and this applies principally to the well-off independent professions, a man can survive on his personal savings.

In the course of elaborate discussions in Parliament in conjunction with the latest revision of Old Age Pension, it was decided that the first two "pillars" should together sum up to 60 per cent of the earnings of a non self-employed person upon retirement. This was generally considered as a fair and honest ideal, sufficient to prevent the standard of living of the ordinary man from declining sharply after his retirement from active life. Only the communists, who want no less than a general and state financed Old Age Pension, found that it did not go far enough.

All the parties and the insurance companies concerned agreed at first sight, that the proposed goal was attainable and desirable. Hardly any reservations on this scheme could be seen published anywhere. This silence was broken, surprisingly on the same day, by the *Basler Nachrichten* and the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* on 12th May. Neither of these respectable dailies can in any way be accused of dissent. Their point was, however, that it was impractical and an excessive burden

on employers to expect them to help in topping up official Old Age Pension in order to reach the 60 per cent target.

The *Basler Nachrichten* explains, in considerable technical details, that the small firms will just not be able to cope with such a demand, particularly when the steady increase of costs of wages are taken into account. The fact that private contributions at the end of one's working life are *proportional* to earnings, and not a predetermined sum means that when a 63-year-old worker is given a 100 franc a month rise, he should add 3,000 francs to his own pension account in order to be eligible for the full prescribed percentage of their last income. If the worker doesn't pay this, the firm must, and both papers point out that under these conditions, very few firms will be willing to award rises to their elderly employees.

Other factors have been overlooked. In particular, the papers mention the massive reorganisations and the many years which will be required by professional pension funds to submit to some sort of unifying legislation.

Observers also noted the contradiction between a free economy and the obligation imposed by the State on employers to create a practically sufficient pension system at the cost of their own resources.

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## Railway tunnels under the Alps

The Federal Council is expected to define plans for the construction of three new Alpine tunnels in a Message to Parliament this summer. The Government has to start work simultaneously on three major alpine tunnels beneath the Loetschberg, the Splügen and the Gotthard. In the latter case, the existing tunnel would be doubled. A further project is to link Glarus to the Grisons by a new road.

The 63 strong Railways Commission voted after "much consideration" in favour of the Loetschberg and Gotthard schemes. Although funds have not yet been allocated to either project, many authorities are alarmed at the gigantic expenditure which they will entail. They were budgeted at 8 billion francs in 1965. But the Swiss motorways, which were originally budgeted at 4.5 billion francs are now expected to cost five or six times that amount. This example would bring the cost of the tunnels to about 20 billion francs, in obvious contradiction to a message to Parliament by the Finance Department pleading for more restraint in its demands for public funds.

## New company law

The most frequent category of company in Switzerland, the joint stock company (accompanied by the acronyms AG or SA) are to be subjected to renewed legislation. Mr. Kurt Furgler, Head of the Department of Justice and Police, announced the preliminary conclusions drawn by a committee set up to amend the articles of the Swiss Code of Obligations concerning the "AG", of which there are over 70,000 in Switzerland.

In a Press conference, Mr. Furgler said that particular importance will be attached to the improved information of shareholders. Although they will not as yet be entitled to see the company books, they will be supplied with more data giving them a true picture of the state of affairs of their investment. The practise of building latent reserves will be subjected to restrictions. The proposed amendments will also increase the financial control of companies by ensuring the independence of the controlling body and by increasing standards of controllers.

Other provisions will help to enlarge the sources of capital available to joint stock companies. They will also introduce the system of authorised capital in order to facilitate company mergers, increase the protection of minority shareholders and preserve preferential subscription rights.

Regarding the highly topical issue of employee participation, Mr. Furgler said that this could not be covered in a new amendment of Company Law because it pertained to constitutional

law. The "Swiss TUC" launched an initiative last year demanding that delegates of workers and employees sit on the Company Board. The only step in this direction taken by the Study Committee was to abrogate the rule which prevents a company from buying its own shares whenever the purpose of such operations is to give the shares to the staff in order to promote the sense of participation.

## MODERN LIFE

### Rising crime rate in Switzerland

Official statistics just published for 1970 show that crime generally rose by 8 per cent during that year, compared with 5.5 per cent in 1969. Not all varieties of crimes and misdemeanours show an increase. There is a marked decrease in the frequency of rapes and abortions. The global rise is overwhelmingly due to an increase of road offences and drug convictions.

Of 58,236 convictions of various importance, 31,723 were served for driving offences. Driving in a state of drunkenness was placed well ahead of all the offences under that heading. Drug offences were multiplied tenfold between 1968 and 1970 and 90 per cent of them were committed by people aged under 24. 240 out of 1,024 convictions were followed by prison sentences.

The number of thefts has also sharply increased and, leading to 12,036 convictions a year, account for 57.4 per cent of all convictions under the penal code.

Convictions for abortions have fallen from 88 to 76, compared with an estimated 50,000 illegal abortions a year, out of a grand total of 70,000 abortions carried out in Switzerland every year.

### The majority of Swiss women want to work

The Alliance of Swiss Womens' Societies, which claims over 300,000 members, recalled in its 71st Annual Report that three-quarters of Swiss housewives would like to return to professional life. The main reasons stated were: To meet and be with other people to enjoy active life.

Many of the women interviewed in a nation-wide survey considered that housekeeping didn't fill their lives sufficiently. About a quarter wish to have a source of income of their own.

The two avowed goals of the Alliance are to promote equality of pay and equal opportunity for women.

## Hunters meet to save game

The hunters of Switzerland met for a symposium at Montreux to discuss the means of safeguarding their favourite sport. The danger comes from two main areas. First: pollution and urbanism. For animals, pollution comes from the various chemicals used in agriculture and forestry on which they inevitably feed. The cost of pollution to lakes and rivers is fully acknowledged already. It remains to assess what the effects are on the land animal population. The ever-expanding built-up areas progressively limit the areas where fauna can find food. As a result two committees have raised a second, and serious, threat by launching an initiative demanding the prohibition of hunting in Vaud and Geneva.

According to Mr. J. Barth, President of the Initiative Committee for a ban on hunting, all forms of hunting should be forbidden with the exception of those affecting animals considered as a "nuisance".

Ignoring such distinctions, the community of Swiss hunters, gathering within an association known as "Diana", firmly rejected this pretence and considered the necessary refinements of the law necessary to protect the game and the hunter. Hunting is already covered by the 25th Article of the Constitution, as well as by the 11th Article of the Federal Law.

The six main points necessary to keep hunting a going sport are: Strict organisation of hunting according to the known population of hunters and animals (this is already practised in the Valais). Maintenance and increase of hunting reservations (there are at present six federal reservations and 97 cantonal reservations in the Valais). Third, hunters recommend that the breeding and development of the game population should be adapted in each area to the kind of animals concerned. The exam for the hunting licence should be unified. Supervision should be aimed rather at preventing hunting offences rather than repression. Finally, the hunters insist that the attitude of those who aim for record-size trophies so as to vaunt their hunting performance should be severely condemned.

The hunters know only too well that to save hunting, they must keep the game alive.

### Women take part in their first Landsgemeinde

Women took part in a Landsgemeinde for the first time ever in Swiss history, at Glaris, on 7th May, 1972. About 11,000 citizens were present at this democratic event, about a third of them women. Most of them were middle-aged or elderly. The Landammann, Mr. F. Stucki, opened the proceedings



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under a radiant sun. Many federal and political personalities attended the landmark event, including Federal Councillor Kurt Furgler and the Ambassadors of Belgium, Denmark and the United States. The Aargau State Council were also present "in corpore".

The Landamann expressed the hope that the Landsgemeinden, which dated back to 1387, would continue even though their original document did not provide for the presence of women. Swiss papers gave the event ample photographic coverage. Cameras pointed to groups of women raising their hands among their menfolk with an expression of determination and seriousness. Many of them appeared a little self-conscious. Others, a little lost . . .

### Resorts plan their policy

Eighteen resorts of the Alps of Vaud have formed an association designed to defend their common interests. The idea of an *Association Touristique des Alpes Vaudoises* was first suggested by Villars, Chateaux-d'Oex, Les Diablerets and Leysin. Among its concrete initiatives, it has already published a guidebook entitled *Les Alpes vaudoises à la carte* and set up an information caravan at Roche. It will launch a vast Alp-cleansing campaign under the heading of "SOS Campagne" on 10th June. On that day, all the firms, inhabitants and authorities of the resorts concerned

will set out to clean and improve the hiking trails of their respective areas.

Villars, Leysin, Les Diablerets and Chateau d'Oex will harmonise their hotel prices. The same ski-season tickets will be valid in the four resorts. It is planned to associate Gstaad to the new grouping. Being so near to one another, Chateau d'Oex and Gstaad cannot ignore what each other are doing in the way of touristic innovation.

### Temporary closure of the "Odeon"

The temporary closure of the Café Odeon at Bellevueplatz, Zurich, sparked off demonstrations by youths who have made the place their second home. Having formed a "Committee of Odeon Patrons", they launched a petition and held sit-ins in front of the premises. At an improvised general assembly at the Olivenbaum Restaurant, the demonstrators claimed that the owners of the Odeon were going to alter completely this landmark of Zurich, where Lenin used to read his daily paper. They also accused the local authorities of refusing to grant the Odeon a licence to open late at night on the pretext that drugs were being handled on its precinct. They also demanded a re-opening of the Autonomous Youth Centre which was closed amid much clamour last year.

The owners of the Odeon explained through their spokesman that part of the ground floor would be converted into a restaurant, but that

the café's traditional atmosphere would be preserved.

This pledge hardly satisfied the demonstrators who held a "teach-in" on the Limmatquai and held up traffic. A petition for the maintenance of the Café Odeon gathered over 4,500 signatures within days.

### Trial after the Montreux Casino fire

On 4th December last, the proud and stately Casino at Montreux was gutted by a gigantic fire which caused about 15 million francs worth of damage. The fire broke out when 2,000 young people were in the hall listening to a pop concert by Frank Zappa and his group.

A 23-year-old Czech with a previous drug conviction fired, in the general excitement customary to this kind of show, a small rocket which got lodged in the plastic fittings of the ceiling. The decorations were immediately set on fire and the hall had to be evacuated so rapidly that Frank Zappa's equipment was lost. This, as it turned out, was only the first misfortune of the American group's tour of Europe. Further shows had to be cancelled owing to the loss of their equipment. In London, Frank Zappa was pushed off the stage by a spectator. He fell into the pit and suffered a serious leg injury.

According to Swiss practice, the name of the rocket thrower was not disclosed. As soon as the Montreux fire had broken out, he had rushed



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home to pick up a few belongings and has since completely disappeared. A trial will presently begin to judge him in his absence. In the dock will be a companion who was with him at the 4th December show. He is a youth concurrently facing trial on drug offences.

### Infected meat impounded

Several tons of infected meat were impounded in 200 Swiss shops and restaurants between 19th March and the beginning of April, it was announced over a month later in Basle. This followed the appearance of 50 cases of acute diahorrea and fever produced by a virus in the meat which had been introduced into it by a packer working at the Basle slaughter house who had been affected by the disease.

### Reduction of custody

The director of the juvenile legal services of Geneva, Mr. Christian Nils-Robert, has condemned the abuse of remand in custody in a book analysing the way the judiciary had recourse to this procedure in western Switzerland.

Mr. Nils-Robert said that the law should clearly define the conditions of remanding suspects or accused in custody. Remand in custody should be

subject to the existence of sufficient and decisive proof as to the guilt of detainees and to the existence of concrete possibilities of escape. Thirdly, a man should be remanded only if there is a definite risk of the evidence being altered during the enquiry. Mr. Nils-Robert, who made a detailed statistical survey of the practise of "preventive detention" in Switzerland, said that in all but about 5 per cent of cases, it was not necessary to remand in custody on the grounds of an expected repetition of the offence.

The writer said that the generally small sentences passed on in the majority of court cases did not warrant subjecting subjects to the hardship and psychological shock of being suddenly deprived of freedom in awaiting trial. Mr. Nils-Robert believes that 50 to 60 per cent of the people presently remanded in custody in Geneva after being committed for trial could actually be freed with or without bail.

### Wild boar arouse anger in Vaud

Forty farmers near the natural reservation of Nozon have written an angry letter to the hunting authorities complaining about the depredation caused by Nozon's wild boar population. Coming from France, the wild boars have in the past migrated to various selected areas of western Switzerland, where they have been hunted until recently, when it was decided to

offer them natural sanctuaries in which hunting would only be authorised by snow tracking in winter.

These measures have made the wild boar, which are highly intelligent animals, take refuge during the hunting season in the reservations that were open to them. The wild boar population at Nozon is currently about 80. The farmers of the Romainmotier area now want increased compensation (40,000 francs were awarded to them last year) or the erection of an enclosure round the reservation of Nozon. Wild boars leave their sanctuary in Autumn and feed on grains and cereal shoots, they say. At other times of the year, they dig the earth for potatoes and ferret for worms in manured fields. All this costs the farmers time and money and it is expected that hunting will be allowed at Nozon this Autumn to cut its wild boar population down to size.

### Growing pressures for "Service compris"

The inclusion of service in restaurant bills has been gaining steady ground in Switzerland since 1969, when it was first introduced in the main popular restaurants of large towns. That year, a survey by an opinion poll organisation showed that 73 per cent of all Swiss men and women supported "Service inbegriffen" and liked to know clearly how much



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they would have to pay for their meal. An enquiry by the Lucerne paper "Vaterland" showed that 95 per cent of its readers favoured this system.

The various hotel employers organisations such as Union Helvetia, want the new system generally accepted. Waiters are in fact even keener than their employers for an inclusion of service in restaurant bills. Many resent being dependent for their livelihood on tips, and hence on the disposition of customers at the end of their meal.

Some customers might wish tipping to be maintained, as this is a good way of showing appreciation for good service or punishing the unsatisfactory waiter by cutting his wages, yet most prefer a clear bill. The Movenpick, which is Switzerland's largest chain of restaurants, introduced the no-tips system last summer and has just reverted to the original practice. Apparently, the no-tips system led to a stagnation of business for many restaurants. However, several establishments which have to compete with Basle's Movenpick have quickly organised a campaign to make "no tips" the general practise.

## CANTONAL

### Olivier Reverdin steps down from the chairmanship of the Council of Europe

Mr. Olivier Reverdin, Genevese liberal Democratic Councillor of State, and for the past three years Chairman of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, has stepped down from this office after having held it for three years. He will probably be succeeded by either a German or an Italian parliamentarian. Switzerland's "Mr. Europe" was recently seen by the British people as he handed Prime Minister Edward Heath the £30,000 prize that had been awarded to him by a German Foundation for his contribution to the unity of Europe.

Before becoming Councillor of State for Geneva, Mr. Olivier Reverdin was Liberal Democratic National Councillor for many years. In the course of a distinguished and varied career, he was Professor of Classics at Geneva University, Journalist Director at Ciba-Geigy and Director of the *Journal de Geneve*. Recognised as one of the most outstanding personalities of the political world, he has been recurrently tipped to succeed departing Federal councillors. He was a potential successor to Mr. Spuhler and some people talk of him as a successor to Mr. Nello Celio. Unfortunately, there are no Liberal Democrats in the Federal Council and his entry would upset the balance of the traditional Government coalition.

## Disappearance of Switzerland's smallest commune

Switzerland's smallest commune has disappeared and been merged with a larger neighbour. The decision to put an end to the commune of Illans (Fribourg), 11 inhabitants, became inevitable when it was held to pay out 34,000 francs as its share of the cost of a new bridge. Illans has been merged with Rossens, on whom it had depended administratively for the past 80 years.

## Alsace lives on Basle

Representatives from the two half-cantons of Basle, from southern Alsace and from neighbouring Baden-Wurtemberg meet at fairly regular intervals to discuss their common problems. They met in early May and raised the subject of Basle-Mulhouse Airport. This airport has been expanding at a slower pace than Kloten and Cointrin. The refusal by the people of Basle to spend 26 million francs on extending its main runways has stood in the way of its development. Yet it is promised to increasing use, particularly from the Germans for whom the airport is much nearer than Stuttgart. However, the absence of direct links means that passengers coming from the east of Basle must cross the city's traffic jams if they want to catch a plane.

There are no agreements with the Germans. Basle-Mulhouse has been so far a purely Franco-Swiss endeavour. But as an outcome of the meeting, a study group has been set up to investigate the ways in which the Germans could make more use of Basle-Mulhouse Airport.

Another point raised was that of Alsace's border workers. Twenty thousand workers cross the border at Basle every day from Alsace and Baden-Wurtemberg. This is helpful to the town's economy, which is not plagued to the same extent as other industrial centres by labour restrictions. But whereas the number of German workers tend to diminish, that of the Alsacians has increased sharply. No wonder. Wages in the Basle area are 50 per cent higher than in Alsace and only 20 per cent higher than those current in Germany.

Seen from Alsace, Basle is considered as a kind of Eldorado offering incomparable job opportunities. Basle requires these Frenchmen, and they in turn need Basle for their livelihood. But the French authorities view this development with some concern as this drain of manpower and talent saps the live energies of the local economy. The same problem is apparent in the Geneva area, whose prosperity attracts workers from Savoy but tends to inhibit the growth of neighbouring towns like Annemasse and Annecy.

The economy of Alsace, mainly based on small and artisanal undertakings, is currently declining and finds it hard to resist the powerful attraction of Basle. Not long ago, the Alsace Prefecture gave signs of banning French workers from being employed across the border. This caused considerable emotion throughout the Department and the measure had to be abandoned. But the threat still remains and last year the French authorities confiscated 5,000 copies of a free Basle advertiser circulated in Alsace.

The Alsatian representatives at the reunion expressed the hope that some sort of compensation would be given by Swiss employers to their communes for the drain of local manpower. The general movement of labour has weakened the financial position of communes and many of them are not able to meet their commitments.

There is of course nothing to compel Swiss companies to help out French communes. This would naturally be carried out on a goodwill and voluntary basis. It remains to be seen whether the firms concerned will oblige.

## "Cultural Centre" in the Jura

A 140 page report on the possible creation of a "Jurassian Cultural Centre" has been distributed to all the associations concerned with the preservation and promotion of the Jura's traditions.

This report recommends that the new centre, whose location has not yet been specified, should be the platform of Jurassian culture. It should be large enough to be the venue of symphonic concerts and act as a "source of energy" to the several smaller regional centres equally suggested in the report. These centres should be equipped with a hall allowing for cultural gatherings of up to 300 people. They should offer possibilities for developing various skills, such as photography, ceramic and sculpture. The controversial point of the report is that they should be "autonomous" from the Cantonal authorities, who would inevitably be called to finance them. It appears that the authors of the report fear that Berne should be tempted to use the new centres to culturally interfere in the Jura.

## Louis Noverraz dies

Louis Noverraz, the Swiss Olympic yachtsman, died on 15th May after a short illness. He was 70.

Noverraz couldn't say precisely how many races he had won in his long career, which begun in 1914, when he first took hold of a tiller. 1,800 to 2,000 was his estimate. He won the

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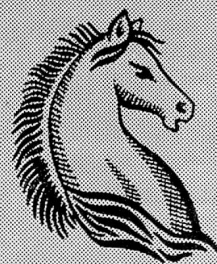
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Olympic Gold Medal at Kiel in 1936. The medal was finally not awarded to him because he had not entirely satisfied the requirements of amateurism. He was rehabilitated in 1961 and is put on the record as the winner of the Kiel event.

Among other outstanding achievements, the One Ton Cup victory in 1953 earned him the reputation of being the first non-American to win the title. Noverraz won the World 5.50 metre Championship in 1961 and two European championships in the 6 m. and 5.50 m. sloop in 1953 and 1968. No one knew the intricacies of Lake Geneva better than he did and he won countless local competitions.

Having studied to become an architect, Noverraz eventually set up in business. He was Silver Medallist at the 5.50 event at the 1968 Olympics at Acapulco, Mexico.

One of his most publicised races, and by no means the happiest of them, was his involvement in the America Cup in August 1970, when he accepted to steer the sloop "France" entered by an eccentric French tycoon, Baron Bich, and was soundly beaten by "Gretel II", the American holder.

#### **Parking space for 1,450 cars beneath lake**

The world's first underwater parking garage to hold 1,450 cars, has been opened in Geneva. It was built at a cost of £2,400,000 beneath the harbour, next to the Mont Blanc Bridge. Parking problems in the city, where there is one car for every two inhabitants, had become so bad that only an audacious construction had a chance of improving the near desperate situation.

The roof of the garage will be 10 ft. under water when in June, the lake, which at present is dammed for temporary construction work, is flooded again. Only the garage's entrance and exits are on firm ground.

The garage has five levels, to each of which cars can proceed from the outside in one freight line. Air pumps change the air throughout the building nine times an hour.

If necessary, even when full with 1,450 cars, the garage can be emptied within one hour. Meanwhile emergency exits and the latest designs in fire fighting will provide the maximum security.

Parking fees will range from 10p to £1, according to the hours and time of the day or night.

#### **ANGLO-SWISS**

##### **The BBC in Switzerland**

The BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Boulez made a tour of France and Switzerland at the end of April. Radio Three listeners

heard the concerts given at the Victoria Hall in Geneva and at La Chaux-de-Fonds' and Lausanne's concert halls.

The programme included Stravinski's "Petrouchka", Berio's "Epiphany" and "Eclats-Multiples" by Boulez. The concerts got a high review in the Swiss press.

##### **Zurich Insurance increases premium**

The Zurich Insurance Group, which covers 400,000 motorists is raising private car premiums by as much as 15 per cent from 1st June. As compensation, bonuses for claim free premiums will increase from 20 to 35 per cent.

#### **COMPANIES**

##### **Swiss Bank Corporation 100th Anniversary**

The 100th Annual General Meeting of the Swiss Bank Corporation was held on the 9th May, 1972 under the Chairmanship of Mr. S. Schweizer and in the presence of 763 shareholders representing 673,455 shares when the accounts to 31st December, 1971 and the relative reports of the Directors and Auditors were approved.

It was decided to make a contribution of Frs. 2,500,000 to the Staff Welfare Fund, to pay a dividend of Frs. 80.- per share, as in the previous year, and a special Centenary bonus dividend of Frs. 20.- per share, to transfer Frs. 65,000,000 to Reserves and Special Reserves and to carry forward Frs. 13,681,688.37.

The other proposals presented by the Board on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Bank were also adopted: allocation of approximately Frs. 21,000,000 for special payments to Pensioners and Staff and Frs. 6,100,000 for the establishment of a Fund to enable Staff participation in profits. In this context the Board has been authorised to transfer in future to this Fund a maximum annual amount equivalent to 2% of the total of the dividends paid to shareholders. A Centennial Foundation, with a capital of Frs. 15,000,000 is also to be established for the support of cultural, scientific, welfare or similar organisations. The General Meeting also ratified the increase in share capital from Frs. 500,000,000 to Frs. 550,000,000 and certain modifications to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Bank.

Messrs. Samuel Schweizer, Jürg G. Engi, Franz Luterbacher, Viktor R. Prunder, Alfred Schaffner, Kurt Vischer and Professor Max Staehelin were re-elected to the Board and Jean Bonnard, Managing Director of Schindler Holding SA, Arlesheim; Mme. Lise Girardin, State Counsellor, Gen-

eva; Franco Masoni, National Counsellor, Lugano; Louis von Planta, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of Ciba-Geigy SA, Basle; Hans Schneider, Manager, Swissair, Zurich and John Wöhnlich, General Manager of Swiss Aluminium Ltd., Zurich were newly elected as Board Members. Mr. Luc Küderli, Chairman of Küderli Metal AG, Watt, was appointed as Auditor.

At a meeting of the Board held the same day, Professor Max Staehelin was called upon to succeed, as from the 1st July, 1972, Mr. Samuel Schweizer as Chairman. With effect as from the 1st July, 1972, Mr. Samuel Schweizer, was elected Honorary President with a seat on the Board and a member of the Executive Committee. Messrs. F. Emmanuel Iselin and Karl Obrecht, respectively, were appointed 1st and 2nd Vice-Chairman of the Board.

##### **Satisfactory results at Nestlé's**

Nestlé's have published their 105th Annual Report. It shows a healthy progression of business in 1971, despite monetary uncertainties and losses in revenue incurred by alteration of parities. The group employs a staff of 111,000 working in 300 factories all over the world. Twelve new plants were either opened or launched last year. Group turnover reached 14,651 million francs, a rise of 44 per cent on the previous year mainly due to the takeover of Ursina and Libby's. Profits reached 534 million francs and it is proposed to distribute 115.9 millions francs, or 60 per share, to the groups tens of thousands of shareholders.

Nestlé's American interests have strongly diversified their activities and taken over "Premium Wines Inc.", a Californian undertaking. On the management level, Nestlé AG and Maggi AG (Kemptal) will henceforth be centred at the Group's headquarters in Vevey, but commercial services will be decentralised.

##### **GF Consolidation**

Sales of the Georg Fischer group slowed down last year. After the spectacular 38 and 60 per cent growth of 1969 and 1970, turnover expanded by "only" 7 per cent in 1971. The payroll of the group fell by 225 departures to 19,900. A new company based in Schaffhausen, birthplace of the GF group of companies, was started up to market and produce Georg Fischer products in Japan and to expand American business. 95 per cent of the groups investments were self-financed.

##### **Reorganisation at Paillard**

Paillard S.A. have made a 7 million franc loss in 1971. The group had also made a marginal loss the previous



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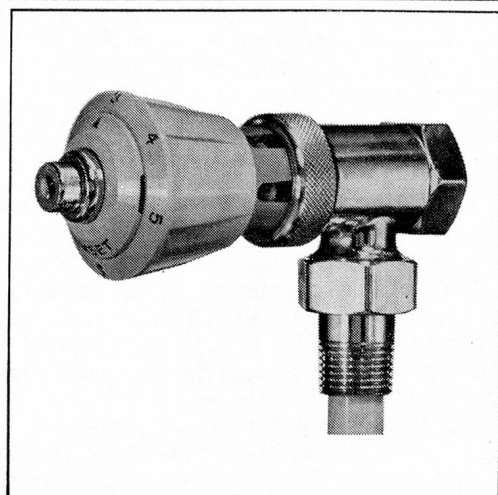
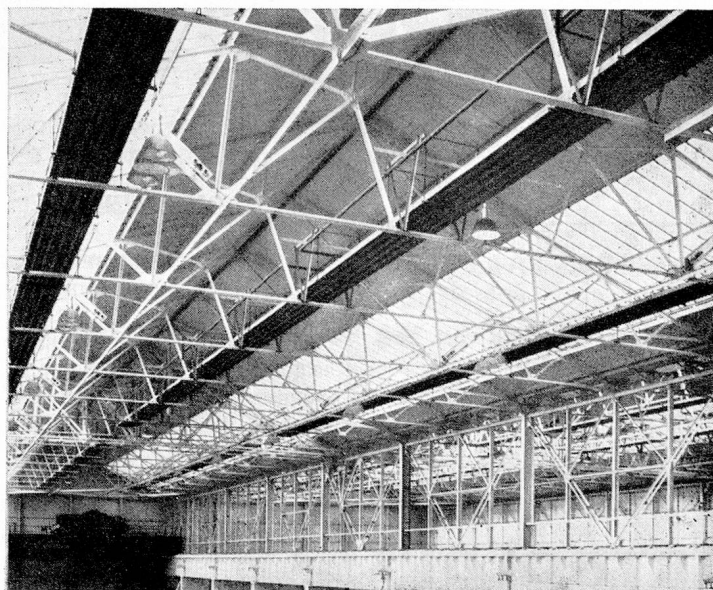
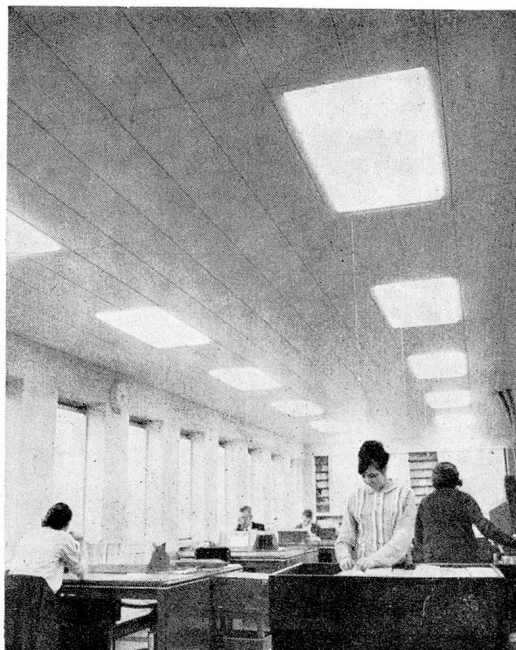
## Sulzer's international experience solves heating problems in Britain

Sulzer's services range from industrial heating and ventilating contracts to a unique thermostatic radiator valve for use in domestic central heating systems. This valve, which is helping British families to get more economy and comfort from their central heating, is called Temset. Set it to the temperature you want — and from then on it keeps the room at that level of heat. Temset even makes adjustments to compensate for the number of people in the room and changes in the weather.

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year. The bad results of last year were due to monetary uncertainties and the revaluation of the Swiss franc.

Paillard, who produce "Hermes" typewriters and office machines, export 80 per cent of their production and have been particularly affected by the revaluation of the Swiss franc in view of the highly competitive market in which it operates. The group, which had a turnover of 227 million francs (-10.6 per cent on the previous year) plans to transfer the manufacture of typewriters abroad, where labour is cheaper, and concentrate at home on the production of a specialised range of calculating machines. The firm "Precisa", which specialises in this field and is 58 per cent controlled by Paillard, will launch new ranges of sophisticated business machines.

Another reason for the losses incurred by the group are the takeover of the French firm Jappy, which also produces office machines, but which is still operating at a loss, and the turn away from cameras. "Bolex" cameras are now produced by the Austrian firm Eumig. The home factory at Yverdon, which employs a fifth of the group's 6,727 employees, have had to cut down on their labour force.

## BEHAVIOUR

### Anarchist hideout discovered in Zurich

The Swiss police arrested seven youths aged between 17 and 24, two of them girls, in Zurich, Saint Gall and Locarno. They were accused of organising an armed struggle against the established order.

The affair came to light when Zurich police investigated a flat where a young man, aged 20, had thrown himself from the window under the influence of drugs. They found eight pistols, two rifles, chemicals for the manufacture of explosives, drugs and

a list of all the important high-ranking officers of the Swiss police and of all the eminent personalities of Swiss finance and industry.

They also found documents indicating that their group was allied to other local Anarchist organisations, and showing furthermore that they intended to launch an armed battle against the establishment. The police found maps and pictures of the police stations they had intended to storm.

According to a police spokesman, the preparation of the group was in "a highly advanced stage".

Four of the arrested youths had been wanted since last year in connection with a series of 21 car thefts and 16 robberies in laboratories, armories and chemist shops. This had been the source of the weapons and chemicals found in the flat. The accused had also robbed a specialised number of short-wave radio sets which they used to spy on police messages.

The police are presently looking for further members of the organisation. Last year, a similar case occurred in Geneva, when a left-wing extremist group with the same general intention were rounded up. They had stolen 22 war weapons, thousands of rounds of ammunition and had also drawn up a list of local police chiefs.

### Drugs haul in Geneva

A total of 44 kilograms of cannabis was found on two German youths, aged 21 and 23, who had landed at Geneva, coming from Katmandu, Nepal, and who had planned to carry the drug to Germany in a specially mounted Mercedes. The first youth was caught at the airport as customs officers were carrying out a routine check of his luggage. His accomplice, who had already passed the customs, was caught a few hours later in Geneva.

# SWISS CATHEDRALS



### SAINT-GALL: THE DOMKIRCHE

The ancient monastery of Saint-Gall owes its origin, in 612, to the Irish missionary Gallus who, with Columba, left the celebrated convent of Bangor in Northern Ireland to evangelise Gaul, Burgundy and Helvetia. With 12 of his disciples, Gallus made Christianity known to the inhabitants of the country and also taught them how to cultivate the land. After his death, in 640, the reputation of his saintliness and love for his fellow men, the name of the founder of the abbey became that of the locality and of the country.

On the outside, the abbatial church, today's new cathedral of Saint-Gall (Domkirche), constructed

between 1755 to 1768 on the site of an edifice of the 14th Century, is in the simplicity of its architectural structure of a somewhat monotonous effect with its uniform row of great bays, drawn very near and taking almost the entire length of the side wall. The cathedral East facade, nevertheless, has a relief on the fronton, the Crowning of the Virgin; it is flanked by two slender bulb towers giving a characteristic aspect to the town's silhouette.

More impressive is the interior of the cathedral. It is a sort of rococo style particular to the Tyrol, pomposity of style in its dimensions and of elegant delicacy in the details of its sculptural and pictorial decoration.

The light penetrates freely below its cupola and beneath their high and large vaults, all embellished in fresco paintings by the Italian painter, Moretto, while the massive pillars and the cornices are clad with light and graceful mouldings in stucco and of groups in relief by the sculptor Christian Wenzinger of Fribourg-in-Brigau. The stalls and confessionals in sculpted wood by the same artist, are also of remarkable beauty.

The chancel is magnificent, closed by admirable wrought-iron gates is ornamented with an immense high altar in Empire style, executed in 1810, which contrasts soberly with the exuberant decoration of the side altars.

The whole, of gay aspect in its polychromy, is imposing by its harmonious proportions and suits admirably the pompous processions and worship on great religious festive days.

*Pierre Savoie*

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