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MANAGERS AGAINST PARTICIPATION

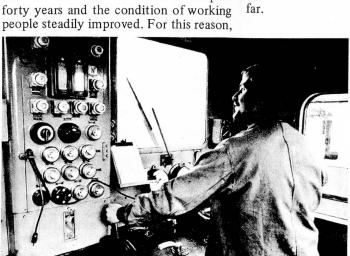
The Vorort-an association of Swiss businessmen acting as a spokesman for industry - has firmly rejected recent government proposals on a new law giving workers a share in the management of private companies and public servces.

Two years ago, Switzerland's main trade union organisation launched an initiative with the same aim. Having number of the required obtained signatures, this initiative should lead to a referendum giving an opportunity to the Swiss people to say whether they want the principle of worker-participation written in the Constitution. In the meanwhile, the Government has drafted counter proposals which will be submitted to the people on the same day.

The Vorort, which has already turned down the Trade Union project, was equally reticent to accept the new Government proposals claiming that they only differed from the Trade Union ideas in wording. In a message to the Government, the Vorort claimed that both sets of proposals left unions and workers free to share in decision-making process at all levels of management, be it financial policy, investment, research and development. The businessmen represented by the Vorort firmly advocated a separation of responsibilities between management and labour. Worker-participation management would only bring ideology

into decision-making and prevent private enterprises from operating and fulfilling their role within the framework of a free economy. But the Vorort accepts all forms of participation liable to bring more work satisfaction, personality development, stronger bonds between staff and management and a protection of Switzerland's peace of labour.

While this attitude might be rejected scornfully by the average militant for its paternalism, it is accepted by the great majority of Swiss workers, who do not mind paternalism as long as they get a decent reward for a good day's work. Labour-management relations have been excellent in Switzerland for the past forty years and the condition of working



Swiss train driver. Should he take part in running the Rail-

very few of them are inspired by

revolutionary fervour and trade-union membership is small. In fact, the participation issue was thrown in he

dormant pool of Swiss working-class

institutions as a new cause to fight for.

The others - good salaries, holidays,

promotion etc. have already been fought

and won. The new militants in Swiss

industry are mainly young people or

foreigners entrusted with more menial

tasks. The foreign-labour issue is at

present a greater matter of concern to

most Swiss working people than

participation. Although participation is a

fundamental problem, and a proposition

which is perhaps more likely to work in

Switzerland than anywhere else - given

the favourable state of industrial relations

-, it has not obtained much support so





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