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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NOUVELLE SOCIETE HELVETIQUE: Thursday, 22nd February, Swiss Hostel for Girls, at 7 p.m.: Film Show.

CITY SWISS CLUB: Tuesday, 20th February, Dorchester Hotel, 6.30 for 7 p.m. Dinner with Speaker. Members will be addressed by Mr. Bryan Godman Irvine, M.P. Chairman of the Anglo-Swiss Parliamentary Group, Treasurer of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. (Note - this event does not take place on 30th January as indicated by mistake in our last issue.)

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY: Saturday, 3rd February, 6.30 for 7 p.m., Dorchester Hotel, Orchid Suite, Annual Ball. Wednesday, 21st February: AGM.

SWISS CLUB MANCHESTER: Thursday, 22nd February at 7 p.m. at the Grand Hotel, Manchester: AGM, Election of Committee and Buffet Supper.

SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY: Friday, 23rd February at the Dorchester Hotel: Annual Dinner.

SWISS CLUB EDINBURGH: Tuesday, 20th February, 7.30 p.m. at Sheep's Head Inn, The Causeway, Duddingston, Skittle Match against Dunfermline Swiss Club.

WEST OF SCOTLAND SWISS CLUB: Dinner-Dance in February. Details to be announced later.

CULTURAL EVENTS

Wednesday, 31st January, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.45 p.m. Charles Dutoit conducts the English Chamber Orchestra in a Stravinsky and Mozart programme. His wife, Martha Argerich, plays Mozart's Piano Concerto in C, K. 503.

Until 11th March, Hayward Gallery, South Bank: Exhibition of Graphics and Books by Dieter Rot.

Tuesday, 6th February, University of Sussex at 2 p.m. and University of Oxford German Society at 8.15 p.m. Talk and discussion by the Swiss writer Herbert Meier. Mr. Herbert

Meier is to go on a conference tour of the U.K. and will read his works and lead discussions at the following venues: University of Cambridge German Society (7th Feb. at 8.15 p.m.); Swiss Embassy in London (8th Feb. at 6.15 p.m. - apply for free tickets to Dr. F. Birrer, Swiss Embassy); University College, Swansea (9th Feb., 3.30 p.m.); University of Birmingham (12th Feb.); North Wales University College, Bangor (13th Feb., 8 p.m.); Strathclyde University, Glasgow (15th Feb., 11 a.m.); New University of Northern Ireland, Coleraine (16th Feb.).

Monday, 26th February, Queen Elizabeth Hall: Recital with works by Frank Martin included in the programme.

Wednesday, 28th February, Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Swiss-naturalised pianist, Tamas Vasary is the soloist of Mozart's Piano Concerto in C, K. 505.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

The following readers will be celebrating birthdays and anniversaries during the next few weeks: Mrs. Kathleen Grob and Mrs. Alice Chappuis on 24th January, Mr. H. Reymond will be 87 on 25th and Mr. E. Luterbacher 86 on 26th of the month, Mr. A. Schmid (Norfolk Court Hotel) will be 87 on 1st February. Mr. A. Bleiker (in Spain during the winter) will be 76 on 11th February, and Mr. E. Weber (at present in Murten, Switzerland) will celebrate his 77th birthday on 12th February.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Eusebio will have their 33rd wedding anniversary on 27th January, and Mr. and Mrs. O. F. Boehringer will have been married for 27 years on 2nd February.

Congratulations and many happy returns to all these readers as well as to any others whose birthdays and anniversaries fall within the next few weeks.

CHANGES AT THE SWISS BANK

The Swiss Bank Corporation is pleased to announce the under-mentioned senior appointments in the London Office: Mr. A. E. Ford to become Deputy-Manager, Mr. A. Huber to become Sub-Manager. Both with effect from 1st January, 1973, and also wish to mention that Mr. A. E. Wilkins, Deputy-Manager, will retire from the Bank (after over 48 years in the city) on the 31st May, 1973, whilst Mr. H. Schmid, Sub-Manager will retire (after nearly 50 years service with the Bank) on the 31st December, 1972.

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EVENTS IN SWITZERLAND

PEOPLE OF ZURICH IN FAVOUR OF AN UNDERGROUND

An opinion poll carried out in Zurich showed that 96 per cent of the population is in favour of the new tube which is actually in the planning stage. It will leave from Kloten Airport, curve underneath the city via the railway station and end beyond Alstetten. 68 per cent of the people of Zurich are satisfied with their trams and transport facilities but 44 per cent complain bitterly at the difficulties of getting in and out of the city. As regards the projected railway line on the Zurichberg, only 52 per cent of the "Zurchers" have heard about it and 51 per cent of these would vote in its favour.

TAXES ON SPIRITS UP 45 PER CENT

Taxes on spirits and other strong alcoholic drinks have been increased by a massive 45 per cent. This has triggered a moderate year end rush to the shops to gather supplies before the increases. One important chain of stores, Denner A.G., invited its customers not to buy more than one bottle of spirit. Most other shops took no measures to limit increases and have not altered their prices. The increase in purchase tax will lead to average rises of 10 per cent within two months.

PRICES WATCHDOG IN SWITZERLAND TOO

The Swiss Government has appointed a Christian National Councillor from Olten, Mr. Leo Schurmann, as Head of a new prices supervision body set up under the terms of an anti-inflation package announced last November by Mr. Nello Celio, our Finance Minister. Mr. Schurmann, who also manages to be a Cantonal Judge at Fribourg and a Colonel in the Army, was appointed for the job because he chairs the Swiss Monopolies Commission.

As the new Swiss Prices Watchdog, he will be responsible for keeping a close watch on all price increases, and refer complaints to the Monopolies Commission or the relevant cantonal organisations which will then open an enquiry. Labelling of prices will be made more rigorous and all increases investigated. The Monopolies Commission will be told to check whether proposed increases involve a whole branch of commerce or industry —i.e. whether they can be considered as restrictive practices.

Mr. Schurmann will be entitled to oppose price increases if he is satisfied that they take undue advantage of the differences between supply and demand. He will also refuse price increases when they are considered to involve excessive profits or earnings and will be assisted in

judging these cases by a special advisory body of eleven members which will shortly be set up.

TV REBELS DEMONSTRATE IN LAUSANNE

Delegates from a dissenting fraction of the staff of French-Swiss speaking television held a press conference in Lausanne to complain about the "conservatism and stifling conditions of creation" offered by the organisation. The fifteen demonstrators represented about 150 employees out of 600, or about half of the production staff of the television studios of Lausanne and Geneva.

These have been troubled by several incidents during the past two years. In a manifesto entitled "For a New Television", the fifteen demonstrators claimed that "far from fostering stronger spiritual bonds in our society, television has become a principal cause of intolerance, mistrust and confrontation".

DRUGS IN THE ARMY

In a circular to commanding officers and commanders of training centres, the Military Department stated that Drug Offences in the Army will be punishable under normal Penal Law. The document says that this solution has been adopted as there were no provisions for drugs in

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the Military Penal Code.

The letter underlined the fact that a drug taker is a physical threat to himself and others as his movements (driving, shooting, etc.) are impaired. If the use of drugs results in jeopardising one's aptitude for military service, then this offence will fall under the 95th Article of the Military Penal Code on voluntary self-mutilation.

1973 MOTORWAY PROGRAMME

Sixty kilometres of new motorway will probably be opened to traffic this year as against 28.2 km in 1972. Nearly all this new mileage is in German-speaking Switzerland and in the Tessin. French-speaking Switzerland, whose motorway network remained unchanged last year, will again be at a disadvantage. The main stretches that were opened during 1972 are those of the Kiesen-Hunsiken on the Berne-Thun motorway (Muensingen is now avoided), a 2 km stretch between Amsteg and Meitschlingen on the N.2, the Mesocco 1.5 km diversion, the 4.7 km Malabarba-Pian San Giancomo stretch in the Tessin and the Reischen-Andeer stretch in the Grisons. Motorists can now enjoy 60.5 km of uninterrupted motorway on the N.13 between Thusis and Mesocco.

The most important extensions which will be completed this year will be on the N.12 in Fribourg between Guin and Flamatt (11 km) and in the Tessin between Laborde and Rivera. The foot of Mount Ceneri will thus be linked to Chiasso and the Italian motorway network. Other works will include four more

kilometres on the Berne-Thun motorway and a completion of the N.1-N.6 junction in Berne. The San Bernardino road will also be improved and Canton Uri expects to open a diversion which will allow motorists to avoid Altdorf before the end of the year.

SKIERS AND HOTELIERS WAITING FOR THE SNOW

There was hardly any snow below 2,000 metres for most of December and

the first two weeks of January. Hotel owners and resort officials were as vocal against the weather as the masses of skiers that had to queue for the aerial cableways that would raise them to the higher reaches where a dry, brittle layer of snow could be found.

Weather forecasters explained that a high pressure zone extending from the North Sea to the Black Sea had prevented snow falls. There were no west winds which could have brought sufficient dampness from the Atlantic to precipitate the snow, they added.

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