

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: - (1973)

Heft: 1661-1662

Rubrik: Swiss events

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: 09.03.2026

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

is a lay and firmly grounded state, and no longer the loose association of semi-independent cantons of 1847.

It was highly surprising, therefore, that so many Swiss should have shown so much wariness at the recent Referendum. It proves that mentalities and prejudices change slowly. The fact that a referendum was held was largely due to the efforts of a Zurich professor, Dr. Werner Kagi, who wrote the general document which served as background to voters. It took him many years of effort and persuasion to get the constitutional machinery moving for the benefit of Jesuits.

The latter will however not see their condition change dramatically. There are already 200 of them in Switzerland, more in relation to its population than in Italy, where they number 1,828. Of the 200 Jesuits working or living in the country, 81 are professed members of the Order and the remainder are auxiliaries or postulants. The enforcement of the two *articles d'exception* had become less stringent over the years. Although no Jesuits are found in university or public school teaching, many are engaged in student and hospital chaplaincies, as spiritual counsellors in theological seminaries (Chur and Sion) and as journalists (the magazines *Orientierung* and *Choisir*). Moreover, Article 51 did not prohibit foreign or Swiss Jesuits from taking up residence in Switzerland.

P.M.B.

SWISS EVENTS

No more military tax for Swiss abroad after three years

The Federal Council have just introduced a bill exempting Swiss residents from paying their Military Tax after three years providing they are permanent residents and have not served in the Army during that time.

This bill, which should be generally accepted by both houses, will replace the present system, whereby Swiss residents abroad theoretically pay Military Tax for eight years if they are in the Elite Troop category, and five years if they are of *Landwehr* age. This revision meets the demands of the Commission for the Swiss Abroad.

It is easy to see its justification: Payment of Military Tax was arbitrary as embassies have no way of enforcing these payments. Although Military Tax theoretically amounts to 2.5 per cent of gross income, the proceeds from the tax are not worth the administrative effort. It is expected that the new bill will cost only 1.5 million francs of lost revenue from abroad. Some have criticized the inequality of the new treatment, claiming that the privilege of being Swiss should be paid for by the duty of every Swiss citizen: to partake in the defence of the Motherland. Practically, it is recognised that the Swiss abroad, with no military practise and living as

they do away from the national scene, are not in a position to contribute efficiently to the defence of the country – at least, after a few years' absence. This is one more reason why the former provisions were unjust.

FRENCH DEMO IN NEUCHATEL

Two hundred French workers from the "Lip" watch manufactory in Besancon demonstrated in front of the Ebauches S.A. headquarters in Neuchatel against the proposed closure of several Lip plants. Ebauches, which is the leading watch component group in Switzerland controls 43 per cent of Lip. The French firm is in serious difficulty. Its former general manager has resigned and the commercial court of Besancon has appointed two temporary administrators with the task of finding the possible outlets to the company's troubles. One immediate solution is to close down or sell – at the cost of possible redundancies – the non-horological departments of the group which have made heavy losses. In fact, Lip's trouble stem from non-profitable ventures in military and civil procurements and, of course, from the invasion of Japanese "Seiko" and American "Timex" watches on the French market. Possible redundancies naturally touched the unions on a sensitive cord. Workers took the train to Neuchatel to lobby Ebauches' Managing Director, Mr. Leo Dupasquier and distribute pamphlets to onlookers outside the head office. They were told that Ebauches, as a minority

2 fine restaurants for the truly discerning



With the elegant Four Seasons and the popular Vintage Room the Inn on the Park has firmly established itself as a rendezvous for those who appreciate good food, luxurious surroundings and impeccable service. The Four Seasons with its wide view over the Park and a superb menu, presents the finest foods of each season. The Vintage Room specializes in succulent steaks and traditional Ribs of Scotch Beef. After dark, continuous dancing from 9.0 until 3.0 a.m. makes the Vintage Room one of London's most popular night-spots. If you appreciate fine food in luxurious surroundings, visit the Inn – soon.

Inn on the Park

Hamilton Place, Park Lane, London, W.1. Tel: 01-499 0888

shareholder, was in no position to guarantee their jobs. Back in Besancon, the demonstrators marched on the Swiss Consulate.

Ebauches is intent on keeping Lip as a secure undertaking. It has invested at least 35 million francs in developing it into a modern and worthwhile outfit. About 350 jobs in the French Jura are at

stake. Discussions are taking place between the Ebauches management and the French authorities, who want a "French" solution — i.e. a solution whereby France's No. 1 watch company will remain in French hands. Ebauches is understood to be interested in using the Besancon facilities for its own range of products.

BUGS ALSO IN USE IN SWITZERLAND!

Two cases of telephone tapping broke out in a week in early May. The leaders of the "Revolutionary Marxist League" had found hidden telephone connections on bugs in the premises chosen for their Annual Congress at Epalinges, near Lausanne.

A week later, Mr. Jean-Claude Montavon, leader of the "Groupe Béliet", the youth wing of the Separatist Rassemblement Jurassien, claimed that the conversations of 84 journalists and politicians were being espied, including those of Mr. Kurt Furgler, Head of the Justice and Police Department, and two leading Socialist parliamentarians, Mr. Gilbert Baechtold and Mr. Arthur Villard. Mr. Montavon claimed to possess all the necessary proof to back his assertions but would not disclose his sources.

The situation was reviewed by Mr. Furgler. Holding a regular press conference, he vindicated the right for the security forces to keep a watchful eye on the activities of movements purporting to destroy the existing order of things. Telephone tapings were a legitimate procedure. Indeed, the State would be failing in its responsibilities towards the citizens and their protection by not resorting to such methods.

The Confederation, he stressed, was established on sufficiently firm foundations to accept — in conformity with the fundamental right to freedom of expression — movements with avowed subversive intentions. Every political tendency had the right to express itself in a democracy, but it was not possible to waive some form of supervision on the activities of organisations professing violence and willing to attain their ends outside the framework of democracy.

The Federal Attorney-General, who assisted at the press conference, said that the Revolutionary Marxist League was not just an association of long haired militants but a potentially dangerous organisation.

In a subsequent news conference, leaders of the League claimed that they disapproved violence. Violence, they said, was inherent to the capitalist system repressing and blinding the working classes.

The League, which has been involved in preventing a Divisional Colonel from speaking to students in Bern University, in stirring up a recent anti-fascist demonstration in Berne, is contemplating a law suit for libel against the Attorney General. The movement was accused some time ago of breaking in the Brown Boveri factory at Turgi and some of their members were jailed. The League has consistently denied involvement in the incident.

Referring to the tapping of telephone conversations, Mr. Furgler announced that he had ordered an enquiry. Some details have been disclosed so far and no outsider knows who might be responsible for the tapings — if the case is proved. Many people in Berne are ready to admit that Mr. Montavon's claim might be true. Politicians and other figures have often been known to suspect that their conversations were being tapped. The origin of this infringement of privacy would probably be outside the federal administration. Swiss commentators are convinced that the administration is "clean" and that we are not heading towards a Swiss Watergate affair.

NESTLÉ'S UNHINDERED GROWTH

Nestlé's, Switzerland's most important company, has announced healthy profits for its last financial year. Rising by 7 per cent over the previous year, group profits totalled 1,372 million francs, or 8.7 per cent of a consolidated turnover of 15,770 million francs (almost £2 billion). Half of the Group's sales are made in Europe, a third in the U.S. and the remainder in South America, Asia and Africa. Almost a third of sales come from instant drinks.

Last year, Nestlé's bought Stouffer Frozen Foods, part of the American Litton Group, which has suffered from a liquidity crisis. This was the latest of innumerable brand names to be embraced by the Nestlé Empire. Two years ago, Nestlé's acquired Ursina-Franck (Tomi mustard). Other recent acquisitions are Findus frozen foods, Libby and Knorr. Shareholders have been offered 77 francs per share.

Bernie Cornfeld Arrested

The fallen financier Bernard Cornfeld, founder and former chairman of the giant Investment Overseas Services (I.O.S.) mutual fund, was arrested during a short visit to Geneva. Coming from London, the 44 year-old tycoon had come to his castle at Frangy, Haute Savoie. Not resisting the temptation to cover the few kilometres to Geneva, he left for the city and was arrested at his luxury lakeshore villa on the route de Pregny, known as a venue for jet-set and licentious feasts. It was there that he was arrested by the order of Judge P. Weber, examining magistrate in a case brought against Cornfeld by former I.O.S. salesmen claiming four million francs of damages for losses incurred when I.O.S. shares plummeted in 1971. Cornfeld was detained at the ancient prison of Saint Antoine, on the old city ramparts and appeared before a magistrates court three days later. During a one minute hearing, he was notified of three charges of disloyal management, abettment to speculation and fraud. He was remanded in custody for six months. His lawyers said that they would try to reach an out-of-court agreement with the plaintiffs but it was expected that the Geneva Court would press charges even if such an agreement should occur.

Mr. Weber announced that possible charges of embezzlement could eventually be brought against the defendant. Cornfeld is a well known figure in Geneva. His headquarters were initially located on the Geneva waterfront. For tax purposes and various brushes with the local authorities, he moved his offices to Ferney-Voltaire, in nearby France. There, he employed about 400 regally-paid salesman and financial analysis in an office block erected in four months. The stories about Cornfeld, his obscure eastern European origins, his extravagances, his gold-plated toilets, private jet and rollicking secretaries abound. He wasn't exactly a welcome guest in a Calvinistic banking establishment concerned with its reputation. Nevertheless, I.O.S. was at the time the largest investment fund in the world, channelling over a billion dollars of private savings. It began to fall after disclosures of massive and unsecured investments in Alaska. Being better at salesmanship and promotion than at financial marksmanship, the managers lost their head and proved unable to avert the crash in which thousands of small investors lost their savings. According to a Geneva daily, I.O.S. had been a fairly sound business despite huge overheads and an absence of cost control. It could have been saved by the right minds. As for Cornfeld, he was one of the rare people to be found in the business world with a deep contempt for Swiss banks and their methods!

The I.O.S. vicissitudes are loosely connected with the Watergate scandal in

Washington via the obscure financier Robert Vesco, who succeeded Cornfeld as head of I.O.S. Vesco is wanted in the U.S. with other directors for having plundered 224 million dollars from I.O.S. shareholders. Shortly after having charged and remanded Cornfeld in custody, the Geneva examining magistrate issued an arrest warrant against Vesco and five fellow directors. Vesco is at present keeping clear of American justice in a Costa Rica hideout.

Those trying to keep abreast of the Watergate imbroglio will remember that Vesco was the man who paid out 250,000 dollars to the Committee for the re-election of President Nixon. This Committee was chaired at the time by former Attorney General John Mitchell. Its Treasurer was Mr. Maurice Stans, former Secretary of the Department of Commerce. The two men have been charged with receiving the money illegally as its origin was not disclosed at the time (according to American legislation, the names of contributors to electoral funds were to be made public). It was also alleged that Vesco had paid out the money as a bribe to halt the official inquiry into his I.O.S. manipulations.

Almost two years before, Vesco had been arrested and jailed at Geneva's Saint Antoine prison following a suit by deceived shareholders. He was apparently set free following an intervention by Mr. Mitchell, then Attorney General of the United States.

According to the *Guardian* of 11th May "a mutual friend telephoned John Mitchell on the night of 30th November, 1971 to say that Robert Vesco had just been imprisoned in Switzerland and needed Mr. Mitchell's help . . . Later Mr. Mitchell said that because of his friendship with Mr. Sears (the 30th November caller) he put through a phone call to the U.S. Embassy in Switzerland. Within 24 hours Mr. Vesco was released".

This last statement is an astonishing reflexion on how political and judicial influences mingle. How can an American Minister of Justice have an American national released from a Swiss jail by putting through a call to the U.S. Embassy in Berne? This seems to conflict with the Swiss reputation of administrative probity.

SOME DISAPPOINTING SPORTS NEWS

Fritz Chervet, a pugnacious little man from Berne who holds the European Flyweight title, failed in his attempt to snatch the World Title against the lightning Thai puncher Chartchai Chionoi. The fight took place in the sweltering heat of the Kittikahorn stadium in Bangkok in front of 20,000 Thai fanatics excited to a very high pitch by a previous display of Thai boxing, and 500 Swiss supporters. Chervet's defeat was unexpected and confirmed Chionoi's reputation for luck. Chervet was wounded at the eyebrow at the end of the 4th round by an accidental movement of his opponent's head. Gripped by fear, the Swiss champion had put up a rather tentative show in the first two rounds, but had warmed up by the third and vigorously counter-attacked in the fourth. As this head knock had opened his eyebrow by two inches, the attending doctor called off the fight and Chionoi was declared World Champion. The World Boxing Association title had been vacant since the death of the Japanese Masao Ohba, killed at the beginning of the year in a road accident.

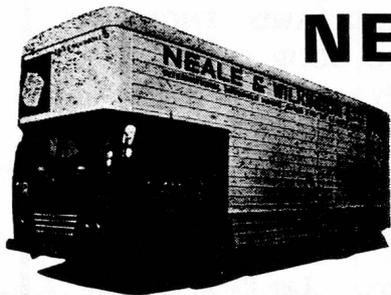
This defeat greatly disappointed Chervet's Bernese supporters. Federal Councillor Hans Peter Tschudi, Minister of home affairs, expressed his regret and admired his compatriot's courage and physical endurance. Chervet, winner of 47 out of 53 professional fights, had trained for three weeks in Bangkok to get used to the climate. There is talk of a return match in Switzerland.

Switzerland's international performance was no better in tennis. The Swiss, whose tennis performance is one of the most lackluster in the world, were thrashed by the Germans in the eighth-finals of the Davis Cup, European Zone. The German team then went on to beat Britain at the quarter-finals. Switzerland's No. 1 player is still the ex-Yugoslav Dmitri Sturdza, who has been around for longer than many can remember. He has made regular Wimbledon appearances but last year was only entitled to compete in

the doubles. One reason why Swiss tennis is so poor is that the sport has not yet acquired respectability and popularity. It is still considered as an upper-class pleasure — although every Swiss could practice this sport. But then tennis is considered as nothing more than a pastime by those who play it. Very little is done in the way of coaching. There is no federal help whatever. Last year, the Juniors who came to Wimbledon to try their hands had never played on a lawn! They were piteously eliminated. The growing laziness which accompanies prosperity has also contributed to the situation. Davis Cup organisers in Switzerland can no longer find ball-boys!

Alas, our football team's disappointing performance against Turkey has strongly diminished Switzerland's chances of playing at the forthcoming World Cup. Being in Group 2, the Swiss team has been confronted with Italy, Turkey and Luxemburg. It has so far beaten Luxemburg 1-0 and drawn 0-0 with both Italy and Turkey at home. This gives the Swiss 4 points for 3 matches, whereas the Italians already have 8 for 5 matches. To get a ticket to Munich, the Swiss must beat the Italians in Rome. As the Italians were the runners-up in Mexico, and given the consensus that the Swiss were lucky to draw in the first leg at Berne's Wankdorf Stadium, there is little chance of a victory in Rome. But one always hopes. The match against Turkey was played at Basle's Saint James Stadium. This is perhaps the only venue with a passionate public and crowds comparable to 1st Division venues in England. Basle have once again emerged as League Champion. But Basle failed to win the Cup Final and had to give way to F.C. Zurich who beat them 2-0.

Finally the world of racing has deplored the death of a famous Swiss sponsor, Mr. Georges Filipinetti. Nearly all the Swiss drivers who emerged in Rallyes and formula 3 racing had developed their skills in his team.



NEALE & WILKINSON LTD.

Member of the Constantine Group

**REGULAR ROAD SERVICE TO SWITZERLAND
AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

78 The Broadway,
Stratford,
London, E15 1NG

Tel: 01-519 3232
Telex 897679
Cables EVERY-
WHERE LONDON

Finsbury Court, Tel: 01-638 9306
111 Finsbury Pavement, Telex 884670
London, EC2A 1BJ Cables EVERY-
WHERE LONDON



Members of Eurovan

UGANDAN ASIANS GRADUALLY ADAPT

About 200 Ugandan Asians have settled in Switzerland. They have now all left the three or four camps where they had been temporarily sheltered (more than half lived in the Castle of Vaumarcus, on the shores of Lake Neuchatel) and have been accommodated in four areas: Berne, Neuchatel, Thun and the Leman. These arrangements have been made in order to keep their families together. It is hard for them to integrate to local life and any dispersal would have made things even more difficult for them.

Six months after their expulsion from Uganda, these 220 Ugandan Asians had nearly all been given homes, schools and jobs. Sixty-four men and about fifteen women were employed. Sixty of the men were working as labourers in industry and earning an average 1200 francs a month. Over 150 members of this small colony were under sixteen and for the most part going to school.

Although the Ugandan Asians have found material security, they are extremely isolated and tremendous efforts of adaptation have been required of them. For instance, many came with diplomas and degrees which proved unacceptable by Swiss standards. They have thus been compelled to take low-paid jobs. Men who had been used to employing African servants found themselves as unqualified workers on the shop floor. As they tended to bargain for their wages, they have occasionally hurt their Swiss mates and employers. Language is of course a main problem and most young Asians go every week to evening classes.

One firm which has accepted a small community of workers is Lenko, the gramophone turn-table makers, in Berthoud (Berne). Families are housed in modern flatlets and appeared to a group of visiting journalists to be on excellent terms with their Bernese neighbours.

Relief Volunteer Force

Over 150 young men have already enrolled in a national volunteer corps which should become operational by the middle of next year. This special force will be at the disposal of the Federal Council, the Swiss Red Cross, the International Red Cross and possibly other humanitarian organisations. It will be in a state of readiness so as to be available within short notice in any disaster area in the world. Volunteers are pledged to take part in relief operations of two to three months' duration once every two years. They should therefore be able to free themselves from professional obligations. Candidates are also held to follow yearly "repetition courses" of three to ten days. The "Delegate to Disaster Aid" is keen to have volunteers whose skills can usefully be applied on the field. Men with

medical and civil engineering experience are particularly wanted. It is not planned at this stage to use this volunteer force as a "way-out" for conscientious objectors. A solution in the form of a non-military service is actively being worked out for them.

Basle's new theatre remains empty

Basle's concrete-and-glass new theatre, which has been erected at the cost of over 50 million francs, will remain empty for a year because the City hasn't allowed for the increase in costs involved in running these new installations. The City had allocated 10 million francs a year to its theatrical life in the past. The new theatre, which required more staff to be run efficiently, will need subsidies of at least 15 million francs a year. Therefore it will remain empty until the next budget comes into application. Its cost and splendour have aroused local criticism but it is generally accepted that a theatre being a legacy to future generations must preclude financial pettiness. The theatre's management hopes to raise its revenue by increasing the price of tickets and signing television contracts. The City of Basle has asked Basle-Land, its sister half-Canton, to contribute towards the cost of running the theatre but the "countrymen" have stubbornly refused to oblige.

Ex-queen of Italy involved in a car accident

Queen Marie-José, wife of ex-King Humberto of Italy, was wounded in an accident on the Geneva-Lausanne motorway. She was ejected from her car in a

collision and suffered several fractured ribs and a broken collar bone. She was travelling with Mr. André Marescotti, Professor at the Geneva Conservatorium in order to attend a rehearsal of Honegger's "King David" at Nyon. He was also wounded. Queen Marie-José lives in Cascais, Portugal. The King came to her bedside in a Geneva hospital which she was expected to leave in a few weeks.

Roche continues its Fight

Roche Products (UK) do not intend to slash their prices on Valium and Librium, as they have been told to by the British Government, without fighting back. Following recommendations by the Monopolies Commission, the British subsidiary of the world-wide Swiss pharmaceuticals company were ordered to bring the price of Valium to 25 per cent of its value when first marketed here and the price of Librium to 40 per cent of the original and refund over £1 million as dues for excess profits.

These new prices were to be implemented on 23rd April. A check at the local chemist will show that Roche have very incompletely followed the order. A prescription for 100 Valium pills had dropped at the end of April from 77p to 62p, or about one quarter, instead of the three-quarter fall called for. Apparently, all chemists in this country have received piles of documentation and reviews on the Valium and Librium controversy.



TRAVEL TWICE MONTHLY TO AND FROM SWITZERLAND AND ENGLAND

Providing DOOR TO DOOR SERVICES
with vans specially equipped to carry
— Household Removals. — Exhibition Goods..
— Works of Art. — Machinery.

For full information contact

In Switzerland

KEHRLI + OELER LTD.,
3001 Berne,
Bubenbergplatz 9.
Tel. 031 22 00 22.
Telex. 32414 Kerolch

In England

LEP PACKING LTD.,
Corney Road,
Chiswick,
London, W.4.
Tel: 01-995 1300

In a recent communiqué, the Roche Headquarters in Basle gave further explanations on the problem.

First, it was held that the two drugs are sold at competitive prices. In fact, their British retail price had fallen to 37 per cent of their price in Switzerland following the compulsory use of the patents on the drugs by two British firms. With the recent Government decision, they would fall to still lower levels.

Secondly, the Company maintains that it has heavily invested in its British plants, despite an unfavourable industrial and economic climate. Over 12 million had been spent on expanding the Welwyn Garden City plant and building a vitamin factory in Dalry, Scotland, thereby creating jobs in a depressed area. The report also stresses that most of the production

of the Dalry factory is geared for exports.

Regarding the supply of information, a point which had insistently been referred to by British commentators, Roche said that it had supplied the relevant figures to the tax authorities but refused to give all the data demanded by the Monopolies Commission as the latter had not agreed not to divulge this information much of which, added the Report, was not relevant to the enquiry.

The Report rejected the contention that Roche was engaging in too much research. While recognizing that hefty benefits were reaped on Valium and Librium, two drugs which enjoy enormous world-wide success and which are still protected by patents, it stressed that this was an exceptional case — in fact an exception confirming the rule that a great deal of research falls in a dead end

and leads nowhere. It is only thanks to profits made on a few successful drugs that others, perhaps less generally used but important drugs like *Larodopa* (against Parkinson disease) and *Fimifon* (tuberculosis) could be developed.

The Report added that Roche intended to fight back and was certainly not going to bow out of the British market. Any further cut-down of its prices on that market would jeopardize the profitability of the Group's British operations.

Two weeks later the Company's chief executive, Mr. Jann, held a press conference and confirmed that Roche would fight back, and that the British Government's decision was illegal. In the meanwhile Roche had already decided to appeal to the House of Lords if need be.

SIR ALEC IN BERNE

Sir Alec Douglas Home paid a three day official visit to Berne at the end of May. This visit was his first in Switzerland and indeed a rare occurrence. It followed the visit made in London in February last year by his Swiss counterpart, Mr. Pierre Graber. Sir Alec charmed the old, patrician capital by his gentlemanly and courteous demeanour. He had several talks with Mr. Graber, whom he invited for a lunch at the British Embassy; paid a courtesy call to Mr. Roger Bonvin, President of the Confederation, and was the speaker at a conference on the "future of Europe".

What did Sir Alec and Mr. Graber talk about? Aside from the polite assertions regarding the importance of Anglo-Swiss relations and his pleasure in Bern, it transpired from a news con-

ference that the respective tactics of the two countries at the Helsinki talks preparing the way for a European Conference on Security was the major theme discussed by the two men. But Sir Alec was totally non-committal regarding British support to the Swiss solution tabled at the talks. He said that the Russians and the Poles has outlined similar proposals and that they, too, had to be examined. The skein of options aired at Helsinki had to be unravelled. He would not say whether Britain was prepared to hold talks on European Security at the foreign affairs ministers level this summer.

Regarding Europe, he stressed that he would back any Swiss demand for closer cooperation with the E.E.C. within the institutional framework of the Community.

Sir Alec politely eluded a question on alleged Swiss violations of sanctions against Rhodesia. He said that the case of the Boeing aircraft which flew from Basle to Salisbury did not prove at this stage that Switzerland had broken the sanctions. This question does however not seem to have been dealt with by the two leaders, neither has Switzerland's eventual membership of the UN.

Not being a member of that organisation, Switzerland is not a party to the sanctions decided against Rhodesia. The retiring British representative at the UN, Sir Colin Crowe, was more direct than Sir Alec. Three days before the latter's visit to Berne, he was claiming before the Security Council that Rhodesia was exporting its goods by circuitous ways. He mentioned the case of Rhodesian sugar supposedly produced in Malawi, exported via Lourenco Marques, bought by a Swiss company, imported in a Persian Gulf country and payed by the importer with a bill accepted by the Beyrut branch of the Soviet Narodny bank. Expectedly, the Russian delegate protested at the statement. There was of course no one to defend the Swiss point of view.

THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY IN CONTINUED HEALTH

While Roche is sorting out its litigation with the British Government, the two other Swiss chemical and pharmaceuticals giants, Sandoz and Ciba-Geigy have reported a continuing growth in their business.

Sandoz's turnover increased in 1972 by 12 per cent to 3,395 million francs (£400 million), over half of which were pharmaceuticals and a third dyestuffs. 30 per cent of sales were in the common market, 15 per cent in former EFTA group. Europe as a whole accounted for 54 per cent of the group's business and the US, 23 per cent. Profits rose slower than sales and amounted to 258 million francs before corrections due to monetary fluctuations (which cost Sandoz 83 million francs in revenue). The group's Swiss factories sold 1204 million francs worth of chemical and pharmaceutical production and netted a 63 million franc profit. The group invested 305 million francs in new plant and equipment.

Ciba-Geigy raised its turnover by 8 per cent to 8063 million francs. The group employs 71,000 persons on every continent and invested 732 million francs (as compared with 823 million in 1971). Business improved in every region except North America. Ciba-Geigy produces chemicals, dyestuffs, pharmaceuticals, plasticisers, photographic products, artificial flavourers, fertilisers and herbicides.

More than any other Swiss industry, the chemical industry is plagued by chronic labour shortages. There is little scope for solving the problem in Switzerland as no amount of rationalisation will dispense with the requirements of a fairly labour-intensive industry. On the other hand, the Swiss have imposed very tight controls on immigrant workers. Ciba-Geigy are planning to circumvent this by concentrating their expansion programme abroad.

Number of foreign banks doubles in twenty years

The number of foreign bank offices

YOUR TRAVEL

IS OUR BUSINESS

by air - coach - rail - sea

ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

just the ticket

package holidays

independent arrangements

coach tours

cruising

car ferries

motorail

self drive cars

party bookings

private coaches

hotel reservations

no booking fee

Ask for free brochure from

A. GANDON

HOWSHIP TRAVEL AGENCY

(Established 1934)

188 Uxbridge Road, Shepherds Bush

W12 7JP

(next to Metropolitan Station)

Tel.: 743 6268

MEMBER OF ABTA

has doubled in Switzerland over the past twenty years. With 193 branches, 85 of them under complete foreign control, the network of foreign banks in Switzerland accounts for 12 per cent of all banks in the country.

Switzerland is well equipped in banks as there is one branch for every 1,410 persons. This level is hardly higher, however, than the density recorded in the 1920's. After having dropped at the end of the war, the number of bank offices has picked up over the past ten years, partly because of the growth of foreign institutions. There are at present 540 registered banks in the country (excluding mutual funds and mutual lending institutions).

Another surprising feature is that the "big three" (Swiss Bank Corporation, Swiss Credit Bank and Union Bank of Switzerland) account for only 12 per cent of the number of branches. The first three British banks control 81 per cent of all branches in Britain.

Von Roll AG celebrated 150th Anniversary

The engineering firm *Von Roll AG* (main factory at Gerolfingen, Solothurn) will celebrate its 150th Anniversary on 31st May. Von Roll AG, one of the most important names of Swiss engineering, is a world leader in the construction of aerial cableways, pipes and heavy hydraulic gear.

The Swiss factories employ 6,768 workers and achieved a turnover of 521 million francs last year. The group employs 8,244 workers in all and registered a 769 million franc turnover. Its balance sheet tops 477 million francs and the group realises a turnover of 93,000 francs per employee.

Over two million francs will be spent on charitable foundations and a considerable bonus will be awarded to employees and shareholders for the Jubilee Year.

TOO MANY DOCTORS IN SWITZERLAND

Several University professors have sounded the alarm at the danger of an imminent surfeit of doctors in Switzerland. Although there are at present rather too few doctors, the situation will change drastically in a few years time, when a great number of ex-medicine students will be looking for permanent jobs as doctors. Fifteen years of studies are required to become a qualified doctor. As the sudden upsurge in student enrolment, and particularly in medicine, began in 1962, a large output of doctors is expected from 1977 onward.

One doctor for 500 inhabitants is considered the norm of a modern and prosperous community. To keep to this norm, the four universities of French-speaking Switzerland should not produce more than 200 doctors a year. But Lausanne alone accepted 200 new medicine students in 1972.

Too many doctors will conduce to

a scramble for state-financed specialities such as public health or factory hygiene officers. Others will strive for insurance consultancies or tend to prescribe unduly elaborate treatments so as to maintain their income at a high level. The standard of living of doctors could probably not be maintained and pressures for state-run medicine would be greatly increased. To produce so many specialists would in the short term overburden the universities and be detrimental to the competence of future doctors. The general health of the public might suffer from such a situation.

Former Ambassador in London chairs signing ceremony

Nine countries including Switzerland and Britain signed an agreement creating a European Laboratory for Molecular Biology. The agreement was signed at the CERN (Centre européen de recherches nucléaires) near Geneva at a ceremony chaired by Mr. René Keller, former Swiss ambassador in London. Switzerland will be custodian to the instruments of the agreement. The new research institution will have its headquarters at Heidelberg. Laboratories will be erected at Hamburg and Grenoble. The agreement follows the creation of the European Conference for Molecular Biology in Geneva in 1969.

Molecular biology is a fast growing

science and highly publicised since most people have probably heard about the "genetic code" and DNA molecules and so forth. Molecular biology aims at unravelling the very core of life.

Pierre Jaccoud faces rebuttal by Appeals Court

The Appeals Court of Geneva has rejected a suit by Pierre Jaccoud, former President of the Geneva Bar, to dismiss the members of the *ad hoc* appeals bench who have been given the task of reviewing his case. Pierre Jaccoud was charged 16 years ago with the murder of a Mr. Zumbach, at Plan-les-Ouates, near Geneva, who was the father of his mistress' lover. This bungled attempt at killing a "correspondent" was the most important case of the mid-fifties. Jaccoud was jailed for seven years but has consistently denied the charges. Various attempts at having the case reviewed are progressing slowly, and it was because of this slowness, and the alleged partiality of the *ad hoc* examining judges, that Jaccoud had wanted to impugn these magistrates last December. This having been refused on various grounds (that it would conflict with case law was one reason put forward) Jaccoud has appealed to the Federal Court. He is ageing and in bad health and wants his name to be cleared while he is still alive.

LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

THE PEOPLE OF ZÜRICH REFUSE TO PAY FOR A TUBE – CAN THIS DECISION BE LEFT TO LAYMEN?

Sunday, 20th May, was again one of those days – the fourth since we settled down in Switzerland 7 months ago – when the men and women of voting age were called upon to cast their votes. There was one federal matter to be decided – the abolition of articles 51 and 52 in the federal constitution – and in several cantons and many boroughs there were also more regional and local items to be settled.

Articles 51 and 52 of the federal constitution contained a prohibition of the order of the Jesuits and of the foundation of other religious orders and new monasteries. It was felt that these two articles were totally antiquated, especially in the present times of ecumenical rapprochement between the churches. Both the Federal Council and the two chambers of the Federal Parliament in Berne had recommended abolition – the National Council with a large majority and the Council of States unanimously – and the result of the federal vote showed that 55 per cent of the voters were in favour of abolition, and 45 per cent and 5 cantons and one half-canton were against. The result as such – abolition of an anachronism – was certainly satisfactory, even though a 45 per cent minority voted against and thereby showed that many Protestants

still mistrust the Roman Catholics. However, at last the members of all confessions have now acquired the same rights vis-à-vis the state.

The voters of the Canton of Zürich were also called upon to vote on a project for which the cantonal authorities and most political parties had made enormous propaganda – in fact 500,000 francs of the taxpayers money had been spent on propaganda in favour. It was a project for building an underground railway underneath the town of Zürich, connecting Kloten (with its airport) at one end and Dietikon at the other. At the same time it was planned to extend and intensify a number of the existing Federal Railway Lines in and around the agglomeration of Zürich and serving such towns as Uster, Winterthur and so on. The project was called "U and S", in which denomination U stood for "Untergrund" and S stood for "Schnellbahn" or "Fast Railway". A planning commission had worked on the project for several years and the whole scheme was to be modelled on the existing solution in the agglomeration of Munich in Germany. The Confederation would have paid a proportion of the cost, the Federal Railways another part and the taxpayers in the Canton of Zürich were asked to vote in favour of a credit of 600 million francs.

As it was calculated that it would take 15 to 18 years until the "U and S"