

Swiss events

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of any importance have a firing range. Although these installations are located away from densely populated areas, some of the largest ones, particularly in Geneva and Zurich, are close to blocks of flats. Their tenants, who probably spend their working week in the din of a factory or the bustle of an office, can hardly appreciate to hear the silence which they deserve at weekends being punctuated by bolts of gunfire. One of the most illustrious complainants over this nuisance was Charlie Chaplin, whose residence at Corsier, above Vevey, is close to a communal firing range. The retired filmstar's dealings with the Corsier municipality made news for many years in the local press.

The second argument is expediency. Life is short, people are more busy and the rhythm of life has been stepped up. As a result, many consider the two hours that should, under normal circumstances, be claimed off them every year for these compulsory tests are an excessive demand. They believe that the tests can be carried out during the three

weeks of yearly repetition courses. This widely-supported argument is rejected, however, by the Military Department, which claims that men who have previously carried out their tests score much better at exercises held during repetition courses than those who had not touched their rifles during the year. The inference is that compulsory shooting tests contribute to making Swiss men eligible for duty more able to meet sudden war emergencies. The obligatory shooting programme and repetition courses are the two arms used by our militia system to produce fit soldiers.

The third argument is more technical. Some circles consider that the present organisation of the military test programme, which is handled by non official rifle associations, is not rational. The procedure apparently entails considerable expenditure in time and effort among these rifle association volunteers. Critics would like the burden to rest on the Confederation, but the Military Department claims that the present system works very well and sees

no justification in altering it.

Many people feel that shooting exercises should be replaced by physical aptitude tests. There is some sense in this because the restful and easy conditions under which the obligatory tests are carried out are far removed from the realities of war. It is doubtful that, when it will come to the crunch, soldiers who have won their marksmanship stripes will have a mat to lie on, a monitor beside them with field glasses to record kills, a pen-knife to correct the sights, and an "A" or "B" target sitting quietly at 300 metres. Physical fitness and endurance are surely the most important requisites for the successful warrior. But the implications of claiming of citizens' certain minimum standards of fitness and athletic ability would be equivalent to turning Switzerland into a Spartan Republic.

However, the last word on these problems have not been said and the conclusions of the special commission might well lead to a change in a well-established practice. P.M.B.

SWISS EVENTS

FEDERAL OBSERVERS WILL SUPERVISE THE JURA PLEBISCITE

Federal observers will supervise the orderly organisation of the plebiscite which will take place in the Jura on 23rd June and which will enable the French-speaking people of the Jura to say whether or not they wish to form a 23rd Swiss canton separate from Canton Berne.

The Federal Council announced this measure in accordance with the federal guarantees voted by Parliament in October, 1970, with the aim of making sure that the constitutional amendment accepted by the whole of Canton Berne on 1st March, 1970, was properly carried out. This amendment to the cantonal constitution left the way open for the creation, through the exercise of self-determination, of a separate Jurassian canton.

The federal measures will enable federal observers to supervise polling stations before and during the plebiscite. They will also control the way ballot boxes are sealed and transferred, and they will check the count.

The measures also stipulate that voting procedures are to be the same as those implemented during ordinary cantonal and federal votes. Voting by proxy is forbidden and men performing their military duties will be given leave to go and vote. Ballot slips will be devoid of

all official recommendation and will contain the simple question: "Do you want to form a new canton?"

Observers have generally welcomed these measures because any irregularity in such a crucial vote, the first of its kind to be held in the Jura, would give rise to a situation even more confused and potentially dangerous as the one prevailing now in certain parts of this region.

NEW CALL FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE

A call for an extended international "civil service" open to all men of military age not wishing to carry out traditional national service has been launched by the "Swiss association for an international civil service", a movement created fifty years ago by the French-Swiss intellectual *Pierre Cérésol*. This call was made as part of a pacifist campaign at the end of April. Two days earlier, an organisation called "Movement for Peace" had called for a gradual phasing out of the army, an abandonment of outdated concepts of defence as expressed in the Government's latest report on national security.

Ways of setting up an international civil service for the benefit of *genuine* conscientious objectors are currently examined by the Government following federal acceptance of the so-called Muenchenstein Initiative. The objectives of the Basle teachers who sponsored this initiative was to allow young men with moral convictions and a sincere unwillingness in handling weapons of death to spend their time more usefully than by breaking stones in a military labour camp.

But this latest call is far more demanding and bears on nothing less than a complete and open choice between

military training and a whole variety of non-military services at home and abroad. It has been considered as a pious and unrealistic day-dream by most commentators because the whole principle of obligatory national service, enshrined in the Constitution as a fundamental duty of all able Swiss, is put into question.

AN ARMY OMBUDSMAN MAY BE INTRODUCED

The ombudsman whose job is to bring the grievances of German soldiers to the attention of the higher authorities of West Germany and to report yearly to Parliament on the life of Bundeswehr had been invited to give details on his functions to the Military Commission of the National Council, which is actually studying proposals to introduce such an ombudsman in Switzerland.

The go-between of the ordinary West German private and the Bundestag is Mr. Fritz Rudolf Schultz. By being constantly informed of the difficulties and complaints of soldiers and officers alike, he is able to give Parliament, or the Ministry of Defence, a detailed picture of what is happening in the armed forces and thus promote new regulations. This system not only guarantees the soldier's rights, but also strengthens political control over the military. Any soldier who has been aggrieved by a violation of his rights, or who has particular problems, can call on the services of the ombudsman. Although the latter will not be able to offer immediate redress, he will make sure that these individual cases are examined by the divisional commands, the ministry of defence, or even Parliament.

This system has been applied in Germany since the re-armament of that

country in the early fifties. It has taken a new importance with the introduction of laws on worker-participation in the management of all important and medium size companies. It is stressed in West Germany that participation should not stop at the entrance of barracks.

In Switzerland, the idea appears to be far less attractive to most military leaders and politicians. For one reason, the links with the Army and the people are much closer owing to the country's particular militia system. Most serving members of Parliament are officers anyway and still perform regular stints in the Army. Other important reforms are currently underway. Service regulations are presently being overhauled and the Military Penal Code is under revision. Given this, and the fact that it would entail considerable administrative efforts, most higher officers believe that the introduction of an ombudsman on the German pattern wouldn't be of advantage to anybody.

Environment

A first step in the recuperation of materials thrown away by the consumer society has been made in the communes of Rolle and Nyon, on Lake Geneva, where citizens can deliver all their empty bottles and other kinds of glass receptacles at a few well publicised pick-up points in these two towns. The glass is then bought by an important glass factory at 4 francs a kilogramme. This small sum means that the operation is not financially profitable, and that it is entirely conceived of as an

environmental exercise. But the time will come when even glass will be scarce and when the other essential materials we use and discard, mainly tin, will have to be "re-cycled" in a similar way. The people of Rolle and Nyon have co-operated fully. In Nyon (population 12,000) nearly 300 tons of glass were recovered and re-cycled last year.

It being sometimes uneconomical for drink marketing companies to bring back refunded bottles to their plants, million of such bottles are thrown away and represent about half of the tonnage of garbage (1.2 million tons last year), created by Swiss households. The tendency by soft drinks firms and milk producers is now to adopt plastic or carton. But this must also be eliminated. Swiss scientists are working on pyrolysis, which consists in breaking up the molecules of waste products so that their constituent parts can be used again by industry.

Sandoz shows satisfactory results

Sandoz's 1973 worldwide sales totalled 3,616 million francs, representing a 6.5 per cent increase over the results of the previous year. 53 per cent of this turnover was on pharmaceuticals, 33 per cent on dyestuffs and 14 per cent on agricultural chemicals. The floating of the Swiss franc and the drop in the value of the dollar has adversely affected net profits, which fell from 235 to 224 million francs. The company continues all the same to rest on a very firm financial foundation, with a cash-flow of 427

million francs, so that it was in a position to offer shareholders a gross dividend of 65 francs for each 250 franc nominal share. Sandoz invested 323 million francs in its expansion in 1973 and plans to maintain this rate of investment in 1974.

The mother firm in Basle recorded sales of 1,184 million francs, and enjoyed an increased demand in dyestuffs and pharmaceuticals.

A SWISS IDEA APPLIED IN SAN FRANCISCO

A recent issue of *Time Magazine* had a report on new trolleybuses being put in service in San Francisco whose energy is stored in a rotating flywheel. Partly designed by Lockheed engineers, the device consists of a vast flywheel located horizontally under the passenger compartment and rotating in a vacuum enclosure (to eliminate air friction) at a speed of up to 12,000 rpm. The energy stored in such a flywheel is sufficient to propel a bus with 80 passengers for six miles. The flywheel is geared to a motor/generator used either to adduce energy to the wheel or to convey its energy to another motor/generator linked to the drive shaft of the bus. The motor/generator system enables the trolley to brake without losing energy. When the heavy vehicle rolls down San Francisco's steep hills, the shaft motor/generator is switched into a generator which supplies energy to the flywheel's motor/generator in a motor configuration. Thus the energy recouped going downhill will be sufficient to carry

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the vehicle two-thirds of the way up. They call this "regenerative braking". Since "perpetuum mobile" is not quiet achieved, the trolley's mechanical energy is topped up with a traditional overhead supply of electricity which is drawn upon whenever the flywheel turns too slowly.

Such a device was used for the first time twenty years ago by Swiss engineers. The first town equipped with such buses was Yverdon. The *Gyrobus*, as it was called, was not as perfected in those days, mainly because its flywheel could not be made to turn faster than 3,000 rpm. The metals then in existence could not allow for a structure which would resist the enormous centrifugal forces and prevent the wheel from ripping apart. Thanks to aerospace research, the Americans have since developed materials which can cope with such stress. Due to its small energy the Yverdon flywheels had to be re-spun every one-and-a-half kilometres so that the system was eventually abandoned as impractical. But in its time, the *Gyrobus* earned quite a reputation in Yverdon. It has certainly become an idea of some potentiality in these days of scarce energy.

A vote in the Jura foreshadows the outcome of the 23rd June plebiscite

The 615,000 citizens of Canton Berne elected their new Parliament and their State Council during a weekend poll on 7th May. The most significant feature of the vote was the reinforcement of the right-wing National Action representation at the Great Council, and a confirmation of the Separatist strength of the North of the Jura and the anti-Separatist position of the South. The vote thus foreshadowed the expected results of the 23rd June Plebiscite, in which the people of the Jura will be asked whether they wish to form a new Canton.

THE REPUBLICANS DEFINE THEIR POLICY

In a recent policy document, the Republican Party headed by national councillor James Schwarzenbach stressed that the future of Switzerland's prosperity and democracy rested on the preservation of a healthy middle-class. The communiqué took issue with the collectivist trends emerging in socialist circles. It reasserted its faith in free enterprise and private property as the only basis of a stable democracy ensuring social fairness for all.

The movement warned against any new taxes that might further reduce cantonal or communal autonomy, and called for a maintenance of a strong army. It said that if the State found itself short of money, it should abandon some of its costly projects.

The communiqué reiterated the Republican position concerning the "over-foreignisation" of the country and called for solution to this problem conforming to the fourth initiative which had recently been launched by the movement.

Speaking on this last subject at a meeting in the Castle of Wartensee organised by church leaders, Mr. Schwarzenbach said that he could not understand the attitude of most parliamentarians towards his own initiative against excessive foreign presence. He said that so many non-integrated aliens were socially dangerous and jeopardised Switzerland's reputation for the quality and precision of her products. He added that foreigners in Switzerland could not all be considered as "innocent sheep".

Air fares to be raised for the third time this year

Swissair will increase its fares this summer for the third time this year. This was announced by the Company's General Manager, Mr. Armin Baltensweiler at a recent shareholders' meeting. He said that fuel costs, which amounted to 10 per cent of operating costs in 1973, would represent about 22 per cent of these costs in 1974. The company had increased its prices on 1st April. The new increases hadn't yet been finalised but would depend on routes and on their cost to the company, shareholders were told. Swissair's Chairman, Mr. Gugelmann, referred to the Head of the company's Latin American operations, Mr. Kurt Schmidt, who had been kidnapped by urban guerrillas in Argentina and released following the payment of an undisclosed ransom reported to be 10 million francs. Mr. Gugelmann refused to say more about this affair, claiming that any disclosures would be dangerous to other Swissair personnel in Latin America and to the executives of Swiss companies in the area.

THE AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER EXPLAINS HIS COUNTRY'S NEUTRALITY

Mr. Rudolf Kirchschlaeger, Austria's Foreign Minister, paid an official three-day visit to Switzerland during the first week of May and met his Swiss counterpart, Mr. Pierre Graber, and the Swiss President for 1974, Mr. Ernst Brugger.

In an interview to the Swiss News Agency, the Austrian Minister said that Austria had taken Switzerland as its model when it became a neutral state in 1955. But he added putting forward his country's own experience, that it was not incompatible with the principles of neutrality to join the United Nations.

Asked how Austria could safeguard her neutrality while being a full-fledged member of the UN, Mr. Kirchschlaeger said that every country had to "make its own experience". As far as Austria was concerned, being a member of the international organisation (whose present General Secretary is an Austrian) presented no unsurmountable problems. He stressed that being neutral was not a reason for abstaining from voting at the General Assembly or the Security Council on sensitive issues. The Austrian minister

said that his country had never hesitated to vote or take position on political issues at the United Nations.

"The only problem where our neutrality could conceivably be challenged would refer to the passage of foreign troops through our territory. However, a request of that nature would have to be supported by every member of the Security Council and be subject to an agreement between the UN and Austria. The danger to our neutrality is therefore remote".

Mr. Kirchschlaeger claimed that there was not conflict between the observance of a neutral policy and the respect of human rights. As an example of this statement, he mentioned thousands of refugees which have been welcomed in Austrian transit camps. But he added that Austria would never hesitate, should the two objectives clash, to sacrifice its good relations with a given country in order to defend its respect of human rights.

At the end of the interview, Mr. Kirchschlaeger said that Austria's co-operation with Switzerland had taken a new meaning and a renewed importance when the former pro-Nazi state had become neutral. Switzerland had then been Austria's "master", and the "best proof of the master's good work is the ability of his pupil to follow its own way" he said.

Three rob a pharmacy to get hold of drugs

A girl and two young men were sentenced by a Geneva magistrate to nine and ten months imprisonment for having robbed a chemist shop in order to get hold of drugs. The three accused were aged between 20 and 23. The value of the theft added to no more than a few hundred francs, but the court was not prepared to consider mitigating circumstances. One of the accused had also obtained drugs by fraudently completing a medical form taken from a doctor. The girl, Chantal Studer, 21, a beautician, appeared in court in a pitiful condition. The court was told that her weight had fallen to 31 kilogrammes because of her addiction but that she had promised to submit to a desintoxication cure. She was nevertheless refused a suspended sentence and was given nine months jail.

Mr. Chevallaz reasserts the need for public thrift

Mr. Charles-André Chevallaz, Head of the Federal Department of Finance, spoke again of the need to reduce public spending in a speech to the Swiss-German Chamber of Commerce in Zurich. He agreed that post-war growth required, had heavy commitments by the State, but claimed that the time had come when a pause in this line of action was urgently needed. He added that Governments and public authorities should reduce their dependence on the capital market at a time when it was more than ever

necessary to combat inflation. He nevertheless noted that Switzerland's public debt, amounting to half the annual state budget, had been kept within manageable proportions.

The Swiss-German Chamber of Commerce is an important body in view of the massive reciprocal investments of the two countries. With 5 billion Deutsche Marks of investments, Switzerland is the second most important foreign investor in West Germany after the United States. These investments represent 14 per cent of the Swiss total abroad. German capital in Switzerland is worth 3.5 billion Marks and represents 10 per cent of the German total.

THE RED CROSS IS SHORT OF BLOOD

On the 8th May of every year, the International Red Cross observes a "World Day" devoted to some topical pre-occupation in remembrance of Henry Dunant, who was born on that day in 1828. This year's *Journée Mondiale* was concerned with the lack of blood donors in the world at large. The Red Cross is responsible for distributing blood plasma in rescue operations carried out in the 58 member-countries. The 400 guests at a commemorative meeting held in Geneva heard Dr. Hans Haug, Vice-President of the League of Red Cross Societies warn of the danger of dwindling blood supplies. He said that the amount of blood voluntarily given increased by 6 or 7 per cent a year while demand was growing at a rate of 10 per cent. He urged

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GROUP RESOURCES EXCEED £500,000,000

the people of the whole world to give their blood regularly. He stressed the importance of finding new donors and of making people aware that by giving their blood they were accepting an opportunity to save human lives.

Another speaker, Professor Thomas A. Limbo, Deputy Director of the World Health Organisation, said: "We all have the same blood. Our blood is the symbol of our belonging to one human family".

A blood collection was organised within the framework of this "World Day". A 70-year-old woman, Mrs.

Miquette Petermann, who had already given her blood a hundred times, was among the donors who responded to their commemorative call.

Women could still get a better deal

The Swiss Government has the welfare of the nation's women at heart. In response to written questions (*Postulates*) submitted by two national councillors, the Federal Council commissioned the national committee for UNESCO (United Nations Educational,



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Scientific and Cultural Organisation) to prepare a report on the situation of women in Switzerland. This report was partly financed with public funds and was drafted by specialists from the Sociological Institute of Zurich University.

Its main conclusion, resting on a questionnaire addressed to 963 married men and women and 629 unmarried women from 20 to 65, is that the promotion of the Swiss woman's welfare will depend above all on a re-structuring of traditional family patterns. It appears that women today are the victims of a painful divorce between duties traditionally expected of them within the family and their professional aspirations. It is also stressed that the real Swiss women of today no longer fit with the traditional image of *Kinder, Kirche, Kueche* but that powerful habits still tend to keep them in that role.

The analysis brings out the many barriers which still prevent women from fulfilling their aims on account of their belonging to the female sex. This discrimination is apparent in all walks of life but more particularly in the family. The report concludes that a complete equality of rights for women will only be won as the result of a change of male mentality.

Evaluation of the new jet fighter to start this autumn

Switzerland will start testing the F-5E Northrop fighter jet next autumn. This American plane, also known as the "Tiger", is the most likely replacement for Switzerland's old Hunter and Venom fighters. Having scrapped its previous evaluation efforts which had left the "Corsair" and the "Mirage Milan" fighters on the short-list, the Federal Council announced last January that it would begin the evaluation process again with the "Tiger". This plane will be compared with the "Hunters" and "Migare III" jets which presently constitute the spearhead of the Swiss Air Force. The American magazine "Aviation Week" announced at the beginning of May that Swiss pilots were currently undergoing preliminary training at the Williams Air Base in Arizona.

Depending on the cost and performance of the aircraft, Switzerland will be buying from 60 to 90 models of the "Tiger", which will be tested in Switzerland.

TWENTY YOUNG SWISS SWORN IN THE VATICAN GUARD

Twenty young Swiss were sworn into the Vatican Guard on 7th May in the presence of a large public and the Swiss Ambassador in Rome, Mr. Arturo Marcienelli. These young men had signed on for a minimum period of two years and joined the 70-man force responsible for the Pope's security. Since the disappearance of the Vatican Police, the Palatine and Noble Guards, the Swiss

Guards have been the only keepers of law and order in the tiny State. This force, whose present members all come from German-speaking Cantons, was founded in 1506; 468 years ago. The Vatican is now faced with a problem because it has found it increasingly difficult to attract new recruits. It would need at least 75 men, and possibly a hundred. There has been some talk about finding a new solution, but the Swiss Guard will most certainly be maintained during Paul the Sixth's lifetime. The Pope reasserted his appreciation of the Swiss Guard on 6th May during a ceremony commemorating the sack of Rome of 1527 in which many Swiss guards were killed.

On another plane, there is increasing talk on re-establishing diplomatic relations between Berne and the Vatican. An Apostolic Delegate has been posted in Berne since 1920, but Switzerland is not yet represented at the Vatican. The problem was raised in December, 1972, during Mr. Pierre Graber's visit to Rome. The abrogation of the Constitutional Articles banning Jesuits should pave the way for official relations expected to be announced next year.

JAPANESE TOURISTS IN SWITZERLAND

Until the mid-sixties, practically all Japanese visitors to Europe were travelling on business. Since then, however, the situation has changed radically; in 1972 some 200,000 Japanese came to Europe, most of them tourists. According to initial estimates, this figure will probably have risen to nearly 300,000 in 1973.

The rapid growth of tourist traffic from Japan is largely due to the fact that, in order to reduce the country's substantial balance of payments surplus, the Japanese authorities first eased foreign exchange restrictions and then abolished them altogether in 1973. Higher private incomes and the availability of cheaper and shorter group excursions opened up the possibility of overseas travel to a wider section of the population. In 1965, for example, the most reasonably priced trip to Europe accounted for three-quarters of an average Japanese family's annual income, while it is estimated that this fraction had fallen to one-seventh by 1973. Travel was also made easier for the Japanese by the revaluation of the yen and the subsequent floating of its exchange rate, and further by the fact that the Government granted cheap credit for travel purposes.

A survey by Japan Air Lines revealed that in 1970 only 4% of Japan's resident population had travelled abroad. For the period between 1971 and 1975 as many as 10.6% of the Japanese people have planned to go on an overseas trip, half of them intending to come to Europe. On the basis of experience hitherto, 40% of the Japanese travelling to Europe will probably pass through Switzerland.

In 1970 more than 70% of the Japanese tourists who went abroad came from the Tokyo and Osaka areas, two heavily populated and highly developed regions. The age distribution of Japanese tourists travelling overseas is fairly evenly balanced: in 1970, 32% were under 30, 48% between 30 and 49, and 20% were over 50. One notable point is that of every ten tourists, only two were women.

In 1964, four-fifths of the Japanese travelling abroad were on business. The proportion of trips undertaken for professional reasons had fallen to half by 1969, and to a quarter by 1972. When on business, most Japanese make individual arrangements, but they generally travel in groups when taking vacations abroad. They prefer to travel this way because group excursions are considered inexpensive, convenient and safe, and also because the language difficulty is less of a problem on accompanied tours.

Sharp increase in overnight stops

In 1972 Switzerland's hotels recorded 286,000 overnight stops by Japanese visitors, which amounted to more than 87% of all the nights spent in Switzerland by Japanese tourists. The number of nights in 1972 is nearly six times higher than the 1960 figure, and roughly double the total for 1969. As a result, the Japanese have steadily moved up the league table for foreign visitors. Having occupied 23rd position in 1960, they jumped to 9th by 1972, behind the Germans, North Americans, French, British, Belgians, Italians, Dutch and Austrians. Although since 1960 the number of overnight stops by Japanese tourists has risen much faster than the figures recorded by visitors from other countries, it must nevertheless be remembered that in 1972 they still represented only 1.3% of the total number of nights spent by foreigners in Swiss hotels.

Japanese tourists mainly come to Switzerland in the summer. In 1972, 71% of the year's total of night stops occurred between May and October. The seasonal peak was reached in August. The monthly pattern of the inflow of Japanese tourists has changed greatly since 1960. At that time most of the Japanese visitors were businessmen, who came chiefly in September and October; these two months accounted for 30% of the annual total of nights booked by guests from Japan.

HARVARD OPENS UP IN VEVEY

The famous American Business School of Harvard, at Cambridge (United States), has decided to hold one of its international courses in Europe; its choice fell on French-speaking Switzerland. This is the first decentralization on the part of Harvard Business School. The headquarters of its European "Branch" are at the "Institut pour les méthodes de direction de l'entreprise (IMEDE)" at Lausanne.