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HOW TO UNCLOG THE CENTRE OF GENEVA

There are plans to build a tunnel under Geneva's harbour to relieve the city's traffic problems. Most of the traffic wishing to cross from one side of the Rhone to the other must use the Pont du Mont Blanc which accommodates up to 90,000 vehicles a day. Much of this traffic clogs the city centre and forms very long queues at peak hours. Also, many cars reaching the bridge use Geneva's unique "quais" and spoils the enjoyment of a waterfront that should be kept clean and unpolluted for the benefit of tourists.

Although the tunnel project might help the situation, many believe that it will not reduce the amount of traffic on the lakeshore and feel that the millions that will have to be spent will be one more sacrifice to the car. Another project, which seems to be getting the support of the Swiss Automobile Club, is to double the Pont du Mont Blanc with a second bridge downstream. But this would involve constructing a ramp damaging to the environment and would only increase traffic in the city centre. The Touring Club had backed the solution because of its relatively low cost: 25 million francs.

The solution may reside in an extension of the motorway to the west of the town. This could direct traffic around the city rather than across it. This project is under study and may supersede any plan that might further cut the Genevese from their lake by a constant, noisy and polluting procession of cars.

In conjunction with the planned tunnel, two new jetties at the same level, just outside the built-up limit along the lake, would be built and vastly increase the protected waters of the harbour. Pictures of the scheme were published recently in the Geneva papers.

ENORMOUS ARMS HAUL IN ZURICH

One of the largest arms hauls ever made among illegal political groups was the result of a series of thefts by five anarchists arrested at the end of March in Zurich. The five, two men and three girls, had built up an arsenal of 260 anti-personal mines, 24 anti-tank mines, 12 light mines, 162 hand grenades and an impressive array of automatic rifles, pistols and explosives, not counting military and civilian identity documents. Part of this material was hidden in canton Zurich, the rest was found in caches in West Germany, Italy and Spain. This showed that the network was international. Three of the five were Swiss and aged 21. They were Urs Staedeli, a lumberjack, Daniel von Arb, a lorry driver, and Lorena Froscura, a hospital help. The other two were West German girls, Elizabeth von Dyck, 25 and Petra Krause, 36, both secretaries. The West German police have asked for them to be sent back, as both were wanted in West Germany and in Italy.

Documents found in the group's caches indicated that their purpose was not only to supply weapons to terrorist organisations, but information as well. The Department of Justice and Police in Berne said that among documents found, some contained detailed plans on the arms depot at Wassen (Uri), maps indicating the location of other smaller depots including petroleum depots and the lines of communications between various anarchist groups in Europe.

It has already been proved that the five had broken into arms depots at Hoengg (Zurich), Ponte Brolla (Tessin), Zufikon (Aargau) and Hochfelden (Zurich). It has also been established that an anti-tank mine coming from the last of these depots had been used in June last year in an attack against the offices of a company called the Manufacturers Hannover Trust Company.

The eldest of the group, Petra Krause, appears to be a hardened professional. She is accused of having established close links with a number of terrorist groups, including the Baader-Meinhof gang in West Germany and the Red Brigade in Italy.

JAPAN, THE WORLD'S BIGGEST PURCHASER OF SWISS MEDICINES

In 1974, with total purchases valued at 110.5 million francs, Japan came first among countries importing Swiss medicines, followed by West Germany (95.6 million), Benelux (81.2 million) and Portugal (58.5 million).

In all, Swiss exports of processed medicines totalled 1,251 million francs, this figure not including the active medicinal substances exported for processing abroad.

Imports of medicines into Switzerland were valued at 256.7 million francs and came mainly from West Germany (103.1 million francs), Great Britain (35 million francs), France (31.2 million francs), the Netherlands (14.3 million francs) and the United States (14 million francs).

SWISS MACHINERY EXPORTS BREAK ALL RECORDS

In 1974 Switzerland exported 12.6 billion francs' worth of electrical and mechanical machines, appliances, instruments and vehicles. This result represented a new record; compared with 1973, in fact, exports of these products increased by about 14 per cent, ie about 1.6 billion francs.

In this figure however is included the very big increase in overall prices. Consequently, in actual value, ie at constant prices, the increase in the machinery industry's exports in 1974 amounted to about five per cent, ie half the real rate of growth recorded in 1973.

Exports of the machinery and appliances industry (including those of vehicle and instrument manufacturers) accounted for more than 35 per cent of Switzerland's total exports.

THE WORLD TEXTILE CRISIS AFFECTS SWISS DYESTUFFS

Since last autumn, sales of Swiss dyestuffs abroad — which accounted for 20.3 per cent of Switzerland's total chemical exports in 1974 — fell off compared with 1973. The rates of decrease were 12 per cent in October, 2.4 per cent in November, 22.9 per cent in December and 30.7 per cent in January 1975.

This downward trend is due to the fact that dyestuffs are mainly marketed in industries that are affected to varying extents by the falling off in the world's economic situation: this is particularly true of the textile industries which absorb about 65 per cent of Switzerland's dyestuffs production.

To this must be added the over-valuation of the Swiss franc compared with other currencies, in particular the dollar, which penalises Swiss products to the advantage of their foreign competitors.

Finally, Swiss dyestuffs were made more expensive by the rise in the cost of raw materials (+ 150 per cent in 18 months), which account for 55 per cent of the cost price of the finished products.

SWISS NATIONAL INSURANCE

Public expenditure in Switzerland on national insurance totalled 4,579 million francs in 1973. Nearly three-quarters of this amount consisted of subsidies paid to social insurance companies, the remainder being divided among welfare, building aid, etc.

The social welfare expenditure of the Confederation, cantons and communes made a big leap upward compared with 1972. In one year, this expenditure increased by 1,100 million francs, or 32 per cent. The increase in social insurances amounted to 37 per cent. The proportion of social welfare expenditure as a whole rose from 12.5 per cent in 1972 to 14.3 per cent in 1973.

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MOBILE FACTORY FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF DUROPLASTIC FOAMS

A company in Lausanne has developed a miniature factory for the on-site manufacture of duroplastic foams of varying densities and with a wide range of industrial applications.

They can, in fact, be used in the construction of rural dwellings, silos, cattle sheds, cold rooms or deep-freeze units, special foundation rafts, furniture, containers and special over-size packaging, boat hulls, etc; the properties of these foams make them ideal as thermal insulation for cisterns, tanks, façades of buildings, roofing, mains piping, etc, as well as the anti-corrosion protection of ships and machine tools, not to mention the waterproofing of roofs and floors.

The mobile factory developed by this Swiss firm can produce up to 200 cubic metres of foam a day with a density of 40kg/m³. Thanks to its powerful generator it works entirely autonomously.

It can be driven at the speed of an ordinary lorry and can be equipped with special all-purpose tyres for use in countries whose road network is as yet undeveloped. This mobile factory enables countries building up their industrial potential to avoid heavy investment outlay on the building of a conventional factory, which would moreover require the construction of a road or even a railway network for supplying the basic materials and enabling the finished products to be marketed.

ELECTRONICS TO THE RESCUE OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

Thanks to the "Linguaduc" range of appliances produced by a Swiss firm in Berne, specialising in the manufacture of medical articles, the seriously handicapped, and even the totally paralysed, can now — without any outside help — put on the light, telephone, turn the pages of a book and even type a letter.

The "Linguaduc", in fact, enables people deprived of the use of their limbs to control various appliances with their tongue. It consists of a sensor placed near the patient's mouth, a mounting attachment and a housing containing the electronic and electrical control parts. Orders are transmitted by the tongue, or rather its moisture.

All the disabled person has to do is touch the contacts of the sensor with his tongue, in order to control the various electronic circuits. With the "Linguaduc" a paralysed person can switch on the various electrical devices connected to the appliance such as, for example, a call bell or alarm signal, a radio or television set, a telephone, an electrical typewriter, the automatic opening or closing of a door or window.

The appliance can also easily be adapted for use at work points in industry.

The Swiss make noise!

Six Swiss visitors helped to shatter the tranquillity of the Essex countryside when they visited these islands on Sunday 6 April.

Who were they? — You might well ask. They were the Swiss team who competed in the International Side-Car Moto-Cross event sponsored by Strand Glass Co Ltd, and promoted by Halstead Motor Cycle Club.

And how did the Swiss team fare? Judging by the official results, not too well. But when it is pointed out that only two machines were able to race (because of mechanical troubles in the third) fourth place was more than laudible!

Very bad weather had made the course at Little Loveney Hall, Wakes Colne, extremely wet and soft. This course is usually considered dry and sometimes too dusty, but on the day water had to be pumped out of one pit, and after the second race a bottom loop

position, which might have been third but for the fact that one of their riders received some assistance during a race when stuck in mud, disqualifying them from that leg of the race.

And the official results: Overall position: First, Holland; Second, Great Britain; Third, Denmark; Fourth, Switzerland; Fifth, Sweden.

And those who represented Switzerland: Fritz Gerber, who first came to prominence in 1970 when he was the Swiss Champion. Probably his best seasons were 1970 to 1973, but last year raced at Kajbornesbusch. Unfortunately he had mechanical problems and did not score.

Hans Klauser, also a very experienced international. He is now involved in the business side of motor cycles, importing Westlake engines from England. In 1971 he and Nick Thompson



had to be eliminated in the interest of good racing because of mud. Despite the atrocious conditions, a crowd of 5,000 came to watch and fortunately the sun shone for most of the five hours of very exciting racing.

The course had three jumps and varied terrain ranging from steep banks and muddy pits to exciting corners and fast straights. Overall it challenged even the most experienced riders.

The Strand Glass International Side-Car Moto-Cross is a team event of two races, each of 30 minutes plus 2 laps. Five countries were represented — Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland and Great Britain — and each team consisted of three of the best side-car riders from the country.

Switzerland raced with one-third of the team short as Hans Klauser blew his engine during practice. Despite this handicap the Swiss achieved fourth

duelled for position at the first year of the European Championship. Thompson was second and Klauser third. Klauser had a set-back in racing when his passenger was killed in a road accident, and for the past two years he has been training a new passenger.

George Tabarin, a new name, is a protégé of Albert Courajod, maestro of Swiss racing for years when he used to win every race he entered. Tabarin qualified only last year for international racing, and this was his first time in England.

Holland certainly deserved their win. Willi Van de Laan, the youngest member of the team, gained the best positions for the Dutch with a second and a first. Ton and Fons van Heugten, the brothers, followed each other over the finish line in both races; in the first Ton took fifth and Fons sixth, and in the second Ton took third and Fons second.