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example from 32,768 to one hertz per second in a number of recent models."

Mr Rohn then went on to explain the all-electric solid state watch.

"Solid state is the term used for completely electronic instruments having no moving parts whatsoever. In 1970, an American Company showed the prototype of the watch displaying the time by electro-luminescent diodes. This was the signal for most of the large USA concerns who had been contractors to the APOLLO SPACE PROGRAMME over many years and received billions of dollars worth of contracts. The first consumer item they started to produce in fantastic quantities was the POCKET CALCULATOR. Prices started at first at around £100 and to-day they are being offered by many distributors of all sorts at just under ten pounds. Large concerns in the States such as Texas Instruments, Hughes Aircraft, National Semiconductors, AMI, Optel etc. entered the market, which was described as a most lucrative one with promises of a rich haul, describing the Swiss Watch Industry as a dead duck - were published by a host of marketing experts. The media was caught up in the 'DIGITAL FEVER'. Even the Swiss Press, in my opinion much to their shame, started hysterical articles blaming the Swiss Watch Industry for missing the boat as far as the solid state watch was concerned - especially the media East of a line of Berne. Not a very edifying spectacle to witness by a country that professes to the motto 'all for one and one for all'. Since the larger part of the watch industry is situated in the Western side of our country the uncalled-for criticism is especially unfortunate. I have tried to show earlier on in my address how vulnerable our industry is to world trading conditions owing to its 97 per cent export participation. I would therefore expect a more lenient attitude towards our difficulties when we face the effects of the over-valued Swiss Franc, a recession and a revolution of time-keeping initiated from outside. I was shocked and indeed hurt when I overheard the remark - that if the banks (who benefit so much by the heavy Swiss Franc) would foreclose on the Watch Industry today, they could own it by tomorrow. I suppose a few more millionaire's villas on Lake Zürich are a good swap for some watch-making wizard's cottages on Lake Neuchâtel.

"I am glad however that I can conclude on a happier note. The digital revolution from the USA is loosing its sting - so much heralded by the media across the Atlantic. The colossal drop in prices on the USA market from 200 dollars down to 20 has removed the glitter. We in our industry in Switzerland could not afford to lose that sort of money nor could we expect our clientèle the world over to accept such disastrous marketing methods.

"In conclusion I would say that there is a market for the solid state watch as there is for the Quartz Analogue generation - so let us hope that if there are fewer TICS and TOCS coming out of

Switzerland in future, the new types will hum in Swiss tune."

Mr Rohn then showed a modern film on the watch-making industry, and his animated discussion followed which

brought up some very pertinent and critical questions. The speaker answered them skilfully, and the President of the Society thanked him for a most interesting evening.

Good prospects for Swissair

John Elliott, Swissair's press and public relations officer for the UK and Ireland, recently addressed one of the monthly meetings of the Swiss Mercantile Society in London. His theme was his airline's activities and objectives, in which John traced our airline's history along the following lines:

Founded in March 1931 through the merger of two air transport companies, Swissair can now look back on over 45 years of successful operation. Although styled the "national airline of Switzerland" in 1947, it is not nationalised; over 70 per cent of the share capital is in private hands. Less than 30 per cent is in the hands of federal, cantonal, municipal and other Swiss Public institutions.

In 1975, when most of the world's airlines made a loss, Swissair still managed to emerge from this difficult year with a net profit of 25 million francs, albeit with a reduced dividend.

The company has missed a dividend payment only once - in 1961. The main problems in 1975 were reduced traffic in Europe and on the North Atlantic especially in the first half of the year, and large revenue losses resulting from unfavourable exchange rates.

Swissair's fleet consists of two Boeing 747B Jumbo jets, eight long range DC-10-30s, six DC-8s and 30 short haul DC-9s (including eight of the newest DC-9 version, the DC-9-50). On order, for delivery next year, are one more DC-10 and two more DC-9-50s.

Swissair serves 88 cities in 61 countries. The network's recent expansion plans have tended to concentrate on Africa and the Gulf area.

Economies in manpower and improvements in operating efficiency have always been cornerstones of the company's commercial success. Swissair believes in inter-airline cooperation where it provides real benefits, such as the KSSU agreement under which KLM, SAS, Swissair and UTA have purchased and are operating identical aircraft and share the maintenance of the various aircraft types between them. Swissair maintains all its partners' DC-9 engines and DC-10 airframes.

Another move towards greater efficiency has been the introduction of computers.

As a commercial enterprise, Swissair aims to be independent, financially self-supporting and to fulfil a role in the Swiss economy.



At Swiss airports, Swissair now provides ultra-modern check-in facilities with its new computerised departure control system, providing full passenger information and automatically printed boarding cards.

Its objective is to provide services that meet the requirements of both business and holiday travellers. Swissair has never seen itself as a mass transport undertaking and its charter activities are therefore not extensive. Elliott added - "We leave the charter side to our associate company Balair, which is specially equipped for this task."

Swissair has always been environmentally conscious. Large sums have been invested in minimising noise during testing and ground running of engines at Zürich Airport, most of the flight training now takes place in flight simulators outside Switzerland and, although the ban at Swiss airports on night flying are sometimes inconvenient, they are accepted as Swissair's contribution to the public interest.

1976 has started well for Swissair. Traffic in the first four months of the year is almost 20 per cent up on the same period last year. Revenue is also well ahead of expenditure, although the continued uptrend in the value of the Swiss franc against other currencies is still causing concern.

Before his talk, John Elliott showed Swissair's latest film called "Swissair in Concert". In an artistic manner, it seeks to link the preparations for a transatlantic Jumbo flight with those for a concert by the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, a musical score rather than a spoken commentary providing the continuity.

Copies of the film will be available on loan from Swissair or the Swiss National Tourist Office later this summer.

News from Acrow

Four Acrow Group Companies, Coles Cranes Ltd., the largest manufacturers of mobile cranes in Europe, Thos Storey (Engineers) Ltd. world renowned manufacturers of Acrow unit construction bridging and Acrow "Uniflote" equipment, Priestman Brothers Ltd., known world-wide for its earth moving equipment and Crawley (Refrigeration) Ltd., well known for their Acro-Kool chilled water installations, exhibited at the B.A.E.E. (British Army Equipment Exhibition) 21st to the 25th June, 1976, at the Rushmore Arena, Aldershot.

The Acrow Group is an international organisation with manufacturing interests throughout the world.

As well as being one of the great names in building construction equipment, pre-fabricated bridging, mobile cranes and earthmovers, its other many manufacturing interests include materials handling and storage, freight containers, metal fabrication for the oil, gas and petrochemical industries and heating and marine pipework installations.

Mr. R. J. Shove has been appointed to the board of Acrow Limited as a Group Deputy Managing Director effective as from 1st June, 1976.

Robert Shove has been in the general management field for the last 13 years, acting as Chief Executive in

subsidiary companies and divisions in the Rank Organisation, Hanger, Firth Cleveland and Turner & Newall Groups.

This appointment follows the announcements of 3rd February, 1976 and 30th March 1976, of Mr. W. Jack's appointment as Acrow Group Managing Director, Acrow Limited and Mr. Ian Green's as a Group Deputy Managing Director, Acrow Limited.

Mr. W. A. de Vigier remains as Group Chairman, Acrow Limited.

BIG EXPORT ORDERS FOR SAURER

Among its export activities, Adolph Saurer Co. Ltd., at Arbon, Thurgau, has succeeded in winning an order for over 800 weaving looms to be delivered to Iran. The Swiss firm thus consolidates its already very strong position on the Iranian market. This big order, which is to be completed in the course of the year, emphasizes the importance assumed, for firms belonging to the Saurer group in Switzerland, Germany and France, by sales abroad which, in the sectors of weaving looms, embroidery machines and twisting machines, represent nearly the whole of the group's output.



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