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Letter from Switzerland

By
Gottfried Keller

The case Jeanmaire continues to cause consternation. As a result of a press conference given by Federal Councillors Gnägi and Furgler and attended by the Federal Prosecutor a little more has now become publicly known about the activities of the ex-Brigadier and his wife.

Thus it has been revealed that Jeanmaire's contacts with two Soviet Military Attachés and their deputies go back a good 14 years and that Jeanmaire's wife has been actively aiding and abetting her husband in betraying military secrets. The couple have received all kinds of presents from their Soviet friends: a TV set, for example, as well as a tie-pin and cuff-links for Monsieur and jewellery for Madame.

Apart from betraying military secrets the ex-Brigadier also gave away all kinds of information about highly placed politicians. Material gain, however, does not seem to have been Jeanmaire's main motive for his treasonable activities.

It appears that the Brigadier was

militarily very ambitious and acted out of frustration and cold fury because he did not advance fast enough for his liking and was not given the command post he aspired to.

He then acted out of revenge and seems to be a broken man today. He sent a message to the Federal Council asking to be released from the Army. This would have meant that he would have been tried by a civilian court. But the Federal Council has not granted him this favour, which means that in a few months' time the ex-Brigadier will have to appear, together with his wife, before a divisional military court sitting in Lausanne.

Part of the proceedings, it is expected, will take place behind locked doors. One of the few redeeming features of the whole revolting case consists in the fact that Federal Councillor Gnägi has been in a position to assure the press conference that Jeanmaire is a quite exceptional case.

But even if that is the case, there is nevertheless a lot of consternation in the country because Jeanmaire has been able to betray secrets during a full 14 years without causing any suspicion. What, the question is being asked again and again in the mass media, have the Swiss security services been doing during all this time?

FETE DES VIGNERONS 1977

Vevey July/August

We have read about this unique event in previous issues, and what is even more important, we have heard wonderful reports and glowing reminiscences from those who were lucky enough in 1927 or 1955 to witness this fabulous spectacle. Tickets may now be ordered from the Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street, London W1V 3HG. Please write or phone (01-734 1921) for detailed information. The date to remember is 30th July to 14th August 1977, and the next Assembly of the Swiss Abroad has been fixed a week earlier than usual — 19th to 21st August in Lausanne — so that visitors from abroad may take part in both events.

The origins of the wine-growers' festival in Vevey on the shores of Lake Geneva go back to the Middle Ages, and, in the course of the last two hundred years, it has been established as a tradition of folklore and music that mobilises the whole district in the Rhône Valley. This event takes place only once in every generation, and each time, new music and new choreography, plus thousands of performers, turn it into a great occasion.

With over 4,000 participants in colourful costumes, orchestras, artists and folklore, the festival presentation is of rare artistic and cultural quality. It is based on the theme of the cycle of the seasons, culminating with the herald of

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spring and its message of renewed life.

In 1955 the organisers turned to France for their star performers, the Garde Républicaine providing the music with Maurice Lehmann of the Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux in Paris as chief director and Henri Fost, also of Paris, as costume designer; only the organisation of the group performances was left to a Swiss, Oskar Eberle.

For the coming "Fête des Vignerons" the organisers are putting their trust in compatriots: Jean Balissat is writing the music, Henri Deblüe the texts. Costumes and settings will be designed by Jean Monod, and the direction has been entrusted to Charles Apothéloz, the principal figure in the revival of the French-Swiss theatre.

A new type of stadium with a steel framework, open to the lake and the mountains, will provide seating facilities for 15,000. There will be twelve performances in all.

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SWITZERLAND'S CAPITAL CONCERTS

Berne's concert season opened in September and will continue until June 1977 with an extensive programme featuring leading Swiss and foreign performers. Soloists and orchestras will include Richard Goode (piano), winner of the 1974 Clara-Haskil Prize and Salvatore Accardo (violin); the Berne Symphony Orchestra, the Berne String Quartet and the Berne Camerata.

They will perform works by Brahms, Stravinsky, Mahler, Wieniawski, Prokofiev, Ravel, Debussy, Haydn, Smetana, Beethoven, Bach, Vivaldi and Scarlatti.

The season will include a series of six "Soirées" devoted to "Beethoven and his Contemporaries", 10 symphony concerts and 10 chamber music evenings.

Performances will be given at various venues throughout the Swiss federal capital, including the Berne Conservatory, the Cassino and the French Church.

BIG SWISS INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION IN CAIRO

Swiss Expo, a big Swiss industrial and technological exhibition, is being held in Cairo from 23rd November to 3rd December 1976. Aimed not only at Egypt but at all countries in the Middle East, this exhibition — reserved during the first week for businessmen only — will give an overall view of the leading products and possibilities of co-operation offered by Swiss industrial, commercial

SWISS EVENTS

and service firms. Swiss Expo, which is being organized by the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade, an official institution that is responsible for organizing national participation in fairs and exhibitions abroad for the Swiss government, will feature the displays of more than 260 firms, in an exhibition area of over 100,000 sq. ft.

Manufacturers from all industrial sectors that have helped create Switzerland's reputation abroad will be taking part in Cairo.

This overall view of Switzerland today will be completed by displays featuring the big Swiss banks, the country's tourist and cultural resources, private schools, etc. Swiss Expo is the first event of this kind to be held in Egypt for 10 years and the biggest national industrial exhibition ever organized in the Arab world.

SWISS INDUSTRY'S INVESTMENT ABROAD

From unofficial figures it appears that the direct investments made by Swiss industrial concerns abroad — sometimes indispensable for the maintenance of their positions in the market and the

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