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BUSINESS NEWS

SULZER TURBO COMPRESSORS "LAUNCHED" FOR SHELL/ESSO'S NORTH SEA CORMORANT 'A' PLATFORM PHASE II.

A 887 ton 24 m x 17 m x 10 m high module containing two skid mounted Sulzer turbo compressor sets and ancillaries was recently loaded on to a barge at Lowestoft to await shipment to the Cormorant North Sea oil platform for Shell UK Exploration and Production operating on behalf of the Shell/Esso partnership.

The Cormorant platform is to be a production unit and a gathering station for the oil flowing from the Brent, Dunlin, Thistle, Murchison and Cormorant fields. Four direct Avon gas turbine driven pumps will pump crude oil to Sullom Voe. The electrical power for the platform will be provided by one Avon gas turbine driven generator and four gas turbine driven generators. Fuel gas produced on the platform will be used to fuel the gas turbines referred to above and also drive other gas turbines (driving water injection pumps) together with some other facilities. It is in the processing of this fuel gas from flash gas that the Sulzer compressors are used.

Each compressor set consists of:-

- A three point mounted skid with Sulzer LP and HP compressors, gear boxes, lubricating and seal oil systems and a GEC 2050 kW Division 1 driving motor. The total weight is approximately 75 tons. Installation is on the lower deck of the module.
- A free standing local control panel including antisurge system on the deck above the compressors.

SULZER OIL PIPELINE PUMPS ORDERED FOR MIDDLE EAST

Petroleum Services (Middle East) Ltd. on behalf of the Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Operations (ADCO) have awarded a contract to Sulzer Bros. (UK) Ltd. for three crude oil pipeline pumps for installation at Bu Hasa. The pumps are of horizontal split casing single stage design, as illustrated, conforming to A.P.I. 610 requirements and are suitable for operating in series. Each pump will be driven by an existing Sulzer gas turbine and will absorb approximately 3,000 kW at design throughput.

SWISS BULLS AND HEIFERS FOR CHINA

Last November, six bulls and forty breeding heifers were flown from Basle-Mulhouse airport to China. The cattle, of pure Simmental stock from the Bernese Oberland, had been selected by three Chinese experts who had come especially to buy them. It was the first time that such a consignment had taken off for that distant country, although each year several thousands of cows, heifers and bulls are exported from Switzerland. In 1978, for example, no fewer than 5,701 head of the brown stock and 2,364 of the Simmental stock were exported from Switzerland. Most of them went to Italy, West Germany and Rumania.

ORIGINAL CHAINS FOR SNOW AND ICE

Yeti, the new profile chain for use on snow and ice, produced by a Swiss firm, is in fact not exactly a chain but a net. Its very hard metal core (Keflar) is embedded in rubber similar to that used for tyres. With this net, the vehicle holds the road better, has a more effective grip in deep snow and more reliable steering, without any of those vibrations harmful to the transmission and suspension. In addition, while improving traction, it does not damage roads or tyres. Available for almost all sizes of car tyres, the net can also be used with summer tyres. Mounting is easy and quick. Two locks, situated on either side of the net, serve to fix it on the wheel. The net lasts much longer, especially if used only occasionally on snow-free roads and at speeds not exceeding 30 mph. Another remarkable feature, the metal parts are rustproof.

REMOTE CONTROLLED TELEPHONE ANSWERING APPARATUS

A new generation of telephone answering apparatuses is now on the market thanks to the latest appliance developed by a Swiss firm. Type 530 answering device is controlled by a micro-computer. Not only does it record a telephone call destined for the absent person, but it also plays it back whenever the person concerned, wherever he may be in the world, dials a special code known only to himself, thus avoiding any third party being able to listen in. Subsequently, he can erase the recorded message and set the cassette back to zero. Thus, in the event of prolonged absence, the user can keep in touch with his office and handle all information provided in this way in the shortest possible time.

SMALL DROPS MAKE MIGHTY RIVERS

Suddenly realising, while taking a shower, the amount of hot and cold water wasted by hand-held showers, a Swiss thought up a system for placing in front of the mixer to stop the flow when not needed. The tangible result of his idea is a new hand-shower called "Water-Stop", with a push-button valve incorporated in the handle. To stop or start the flow of water all one has to do is press the push button. Taken individually, the saving may be small, but considered on the scale of a whole town, for example, it becomes enormous.

AUTOMATIC MACHINE MANUFACTURING SPRINGS FOR INDUSTRY AND WATCHMAKING

A Swiss manufacturer has produced a high precision automatic machine for the manufacture of springs for watchmaking and industry in general, which won its inventor two awards at the 8th International Inventions Fair in Geneva 1979. The first was the "Watchmaking Invention Prize" presented by the Swiss Watch Chamber, and the second a gold medal awarded by an international jury for the quality of the invention. The automatic machine type M-R-C-P III contains a combination of twelve tool carriers, completed by a special spindle, as well as a system for feeding the wire from the centre or the side, making it possible to manufacture springs of different shapes on several planes, with and without folding. Thanks to the big innovation on the machine, a special rolling spindle producing a forward movement, as well as alternate rotation with stop followed by a restart at each cycle, it is possible to produce springs of circular form, as well as circular shaped forms and any other shape desired. Very economical, the machine is capable of producing 5,000 to 6,000 circular springs an hour, or even 12,000 flat springs. The precision of execution is of the order of one hundredth of a mm. Finally, this fully automatic machine measures 1.15 m long, 0.97 m wide, 1.37 m high, weighs 740 kg and comprises, among other things, output meters, a safety stop, light signals, plus adjustable cams controlling the cycle. It operates twenty-four hours a day, the only supervision required being limited to checks.

SWISS LICENCE FOR TURKEY

The Swiss firm, Inventa Co. Ltd., belonging to the Chemie Holding Co Ltd. recently sold a licence for the production of monomeric castings to the Turkish company, Oezlon Kimyasal Plastik in Istanbul.

NEW PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE

The following publications are available, free of charge, from the Swiss National Tourist Office, Swiss Centre, 1 New Coventry Street, London W1V 3HG. Tel: 01-734 1921:

Camping in Switzerland giving details on 330 sites with general camping information in English, French, Dutch and German.

Railway and Road Map of Switzerland including information and regulations on motoring.

Panoramic Map of Switzerland providing an accurate picture of Switzerland's landscape. It enables the viewer to distinguish the characteristic features of the country at a glance and also incorporates a rail/road map.

List of Winter Sports Season Tickets Season 1979/80.

Rates of Hire for Winter Sports Equipment in Switzerland.

Swiss Ski School Tariff.

Car Conveyance through the Alpine Tunnels valid from 30th September, 1979 until 31st May, 1980.

The Best Trains from and to Zurich Airport valid from 1st June, 1980 (opening of Zurich Airport railway station).

Switzerland at a Glance – Summer including details and facilities on holiday resorts in Switzerland.

Switzerland – International Railway Connections valid from 30th September, 1979 to 30th May, 1980 and including railway services between London and Switzerland as well as TEE services.

UK-Switzerland Air Timetable for winter period 1st November, 1979 to 31st March, 1980 including details of new APEX fares to Switzerland.

Official Swiss Timetable

The winter edition of the Official Swiss Timetable, which shows the railway, steamboat and postal motor coach services throughout Switzerland, as well as many aerial cableway, chairlift and funicular timings, is on sale at the Swiss National Tourist Office at a charge of £2.00. The winter edition is valid until 31st May, 1980.

Economic News

A FEW FIGURES CONCERNING RESEARCH IN SWITZERLAND

It is well known that Switzerland lacks raw materials. The basic products used by this country's industry are practically all imported. These imports are paid for by the proceeds of exports of finished goods. In order to sell easily, the latter must be competitive, i.e. among other things, very advanced technologically. Research and development (R & D) therefore play a by no means unimportant role. From a survey carried out by the Federal Statistics Office, it appears that the sums spent by the private economy on R & D (without investments and capital costs) totalled Sw.Fr. 2.4 billion in 1977. The amounts spent by the different industries are as follows: chemical — Sw.Fr. 1.15 billion, machinery and metals — 1 billion, foodstuffs and beverages — 85.8 million, watches — 85.7 million, textiles — 41.5 million, paper — 6.7 million, rubber and plastics — 6.5 million, others — 19.8 million. These figures do not include the expenditure on R & D by Swiss firms abroad. The cost of personnel represented 60 per cent, i.e. Sw.Fr. 1.42 billion. On an average, firms set aside 4 per cent of their turnover for R & D. The percentage varies between 0.5 per cent and 9.8 per cent depending on the branch of the economy. According to earlier statistics (1975), 78 per cent of the R & D is provided by private industry. As for places of higher education, the public

authorities and the non-profit-making institutions, their share is 14, 6 and 2 per cent respectively. Financing is divided somewhat similarly. The bulk is provided by private industry (78 per cent); the public sector contributes 21 per cent and non-profit-making institutions 1 per cent.

NEWS IN BRIEF

A brochure listing Swiss firms supplying equipment, material and technology for *agriculture and food processing* has just been published by the Swiss Office for the Development of Trade. After a first publication devoted to telecommunications, "Agriculture and Food processing" is the second volume in a collection of nine booklets presenting the most important equipment goods manufactured in Switzerland. This documentation is intended to make the services of the Swiss export industry better known abroad, especially in the developing countries.

The Zurich engineering office Sydeco Co. Ltd. has been asked by the government of Irak to draw up a *plan for the construction of four agricultural training colleges*. The supply and erection of the prefabricated parts as well as the special equipment required form part of the scheme, which is included in a training programme for workers of different branches in Irak. The contract is worth some 20 million Swiss francs.

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