

Official Communications

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Official Communications

The Federal Council decides to increase aid to the Third World

In its reports, published last January, on the broad outlines of government policy and the Confederation's budget for the years 1981 to 1983* the Federal Council announced its intention of raising Switzerland's public development aid to **0.31%** of the gross national product in 1982 and 1983 (estimate for 1979: 0.21%). This decision was taken because of the increasingly serious consequences – for our foreign policy and our external economic policy – of the inadequacy of our development aid compared to that of other industrialized countries. We have become more and more isolated in all the international negotiations in which developing countries participate. We are gradually acquiring the image of a country which refuses cooperation and shuts its eyes to the often dramatic situation of the third world and its peoples. Just as grave for us is the disappointment, or even annoyance, of our industrialized partners, who consider that public development aid is one of the essential tasks of the international community. They find it difficult to accept evasion by a rich country of its part in a joint effort which is essential for the future of the western world and its liberal economic system. More and more pressure is being put upon us.

Solidarity

Fundamentally, development aid is an expression of our country's **solidarity** with the most disadvantaged, a solidarity which the Swiss people have always displayed. Recent public reaction, especially to the cut of 35 millions in the 1980 development cooperation budget, shows that many circles are willing for the state to make a greater commitment in this field. It is in our own interest to do more: the survival of an open and liberal western economy, and therefore the survival of our country, depend very largely on solving the problems of underdevelopment. Many developing countries may very soon be obliged to suspend a major part of their imports if a solution is not found to their balance of payments problems. So in the long term the future of our export industry is at stake. This, incidentally, already benefits from big orders connected with financial aid projects, especially those of international organizations. In short, whether we approach the matter from the standpoint of our moral duty as a rich country, of our foreign policy or of our external economic policy, we are always forced to draw the same conclusion: we must increase our public development aid and it is in our interest to do so.

The next three years

It was on the basis of these considerations that the Federal Council decided to apply to Parliament for a **three-year** block credit for the continuation of technical cooperation with, and financial aid to, the developing countries. This credit of **1,650 million francs** should enable Switzerland to enter into the necessary commitments for technical cooperation and bilateral and multilateral financial aid at least until 31st December 1983. It will replace the block credit of 735 million francs allocated on 12th June 1978 for a period of two and a half years, which will be totally committed by 31st December 1980.

The bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation and financial aid which are the subject of the «Message» in question constitute, quantitatively, the biggest part of our public development aid (the other forms being mainly humanitarian and food aid and economic and commercial measures). The sums paid out in financial aid will rise from a total of 106 million francs in 1979 to 223 millions in 1983, and those for technical cooperation from 142 millions to 183 millions. These, then, are the two forms of cooperation on which the increase will mostly be spent.

The Federal Parliament will give a ruling on the proposed increase in our effort on behalf of the third world during this year's autumn and winter sessions.

**Directorate for Development Cooperation
and Humanitarian Aid**

Human rights and development cooperation*

Flagrant disregard of human rights may jeopardize the continuation of a development cooperation programme. But the situation must be examined case by case and calls for a varied approach. In those countries very broad strata of the population often live in extremely difficult conditions and suffer from such violations. We have reached the conclusion, therefore, that our cooperation effort on behalf of the poorest people ought not to be abandoned.

Lives are threatened by the deterioration of the economic situation, by a reduction in food production, by the closing of hospitals and dispensaries, by the impossibility of a country's continuing to import essential goods, and by the fact that a large part of the population is unemployed. In these circumstances, projects for technical cooperation and financial aid directed at the most disadvantaged sectors may be a means, if not of enforcing respect for all human rights, at least of ensuring the survival of those who are not responsible for their authorities' behaviour but are victims of it.

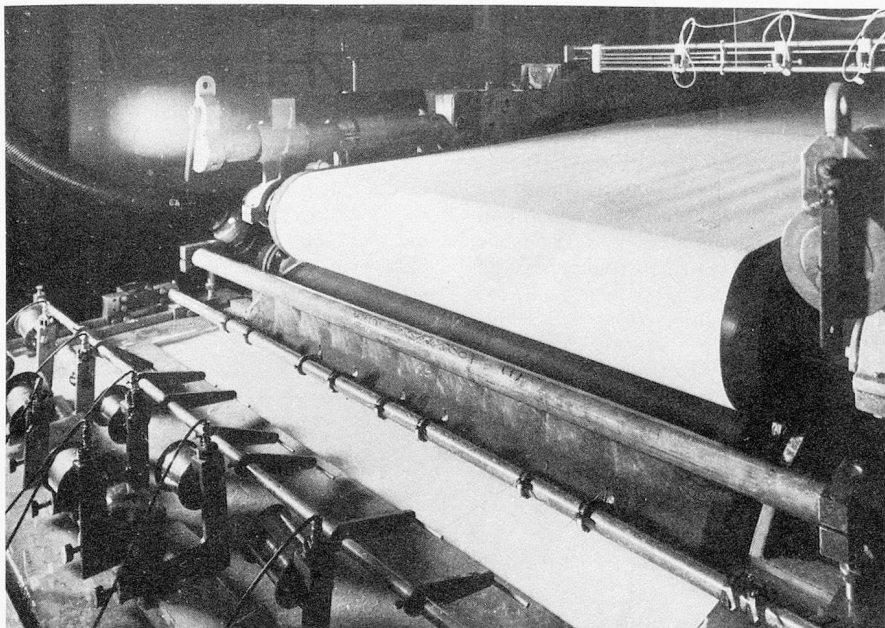
Within the framework of bilateral cooperation, then, we are examining, case by case, not only the policy of the country concerned with regard to human rights but also the practical possibilities of mitigating its consequences. We are doing the same thing within the international organizations to which we belong. We intervene on behalf of respect for human rights whenever this appears to be useful. At the same time, however, we consider that certain forms of aid can continue to be given to the population when they help to mitigate the effects of disregard for human rights and not to reinforce that policy.

* Extract from a Federal Council «Message», planned for June 1980, concerning the continuation of technical cooperation with, and financial aid to, developing countries.

* These two documents can be obtained free of charge in French, German or Italian from EDMZ, CH-3000 Berne. An illustrated edition of the **Broad Outlines** is also free.

QUARTERLY REVIEW

Reflections on the new banknote series



With the issue of the new 10-franc note, which has as its theme the mathematician and physicist Leonhard Euler (1707–1783), the Swiss National Bank finished putting the new series into circulation. As you know, the timetable was as follows:

October 1976 issue of the 100-franc note Borromini type
 April 1977 issue of the 500-franc note Haller type

April 1978 issue of the 1000-franc note Forel type
 October 1978 issue of the 50-franc note Gessner type
 April 1979 issue of the 20-franc note de Saussure type
 November 1979 issue of the 10-franc note Euler type

It can be said, looking back, that the new banknote series has been well received by

the public. The reduction in the format has been generally welcomed; the new design has met with approval and the built-in safeguards have so far proved successful. Furthermore, the whole appearance of the notes makes them clearly distinguishable from those of other countries.

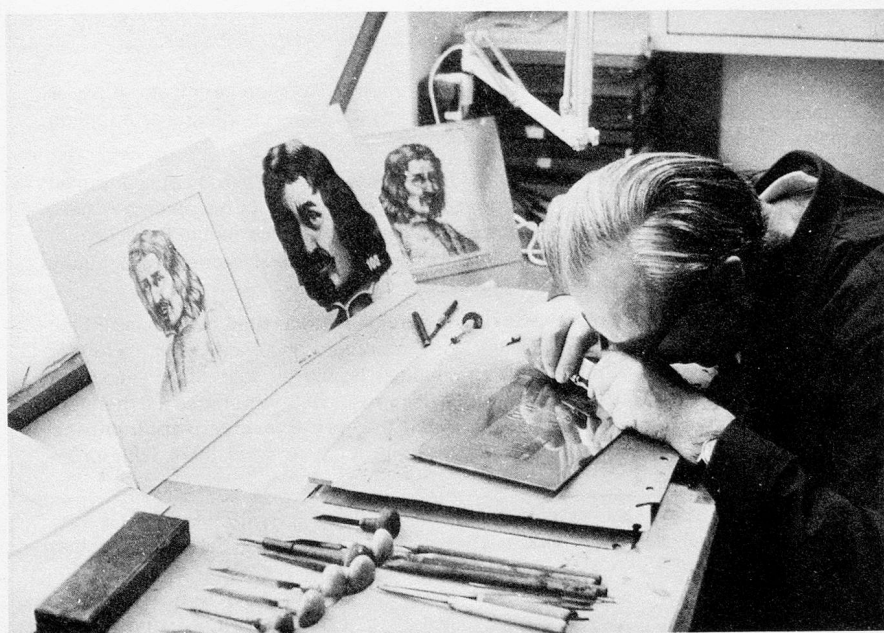
A banknote could be considered a kind of national visiting card, and from that point of view the new series is a credit to Switzerland. The issuing bank must be able to count on the cooperation of the public in keeping the circulating notes relatively clean, for their condition largely depends on how they are treated by everyone. If they are handled carelessly, folded too many times and stuffed into pockets and wallets or purses which are not big enough to take them, the notes will soon suffer, as evidenced by many foreign examples. Even though the issuing bank replaces some 30% of circulating notes annually, it still relies on each individual to handle his money with care.

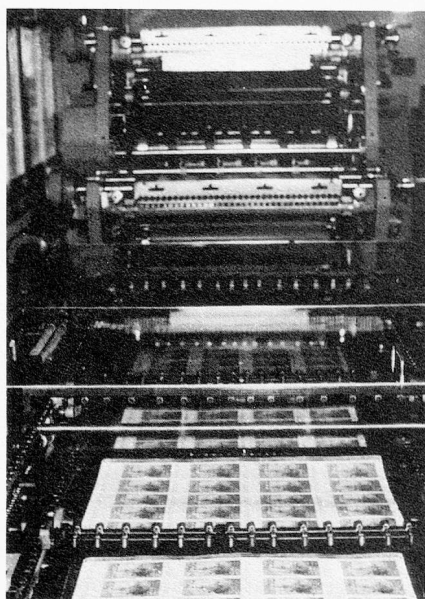
The new banknotes are being produced entirely in Switzerland as from 1st January 1980. Formerly, the paper was obtained from England, but the National Bank has now succeeded, in collaboration with the Zürcher Papierfabrik An der Sihl (An der Sihl Zurich Paper Factory), in creating the necessary technical conditions for the production of this high-quality paper with a tinted water-mark.

Of course, the strictest security precautions have to be taken in the manufacture of the paper as well as in the printing of banknotes. Notes have for some time been printed at the Orell Füssli Graphic Arts Company in Zurich. This firm, too, has had to equip itself with special machines for printing, cutting and inspecting banknotes.

The new notes are inspected, counted, packed and stored in the head office of the National Bank. On request they are distributed to the various branch offices, and from there they go into the banking system, to the Swiss Post Office, Swiss Federal Railways and other holders of accounts with the Swiss National Bank, who are debited with the amount they draw in notes and credited with the total notes they deposit. Paid-in banknotes are inspected by the cashiers' offices. Clean notes are put into circulation again, soiled ones are cancelled and burnt.

Over 90% of the old 500-franc and 100-franc notes and over 80% of the old 1000-franc and 50-franc notes have already been

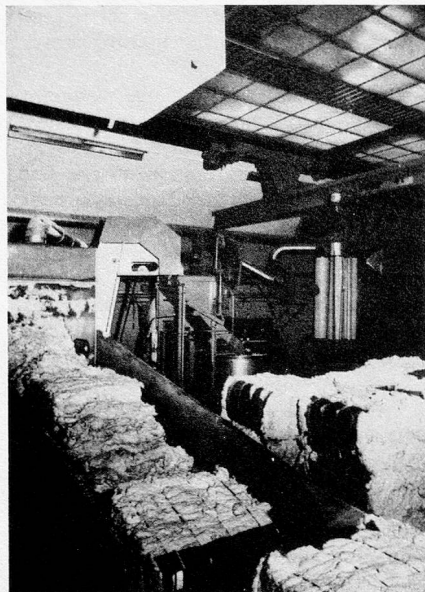




exchanged for new ones. By mid-1980 the exchange of 20-franc and 10-franc notes will probably be 70–80% complete. It will therefore be possible, in the course of the year, to begin recalling the old notes.

As mentioned in the National Bank's last article here, this operation is governed by Article 24 of the Swiss National Bank Act, which states, among other things, that the equivalent value of old notes not exchanged within the prescribed time-limit (20 years) is to be paid into the Swiss Fund for Aid in cases of Uninsurable Damage caused by the Elements. The National Bank will therefore derive no profit from any banknotes which are not exchanged.

Dr Johann Ammann
Director of the Swiss National Bank



Egypt

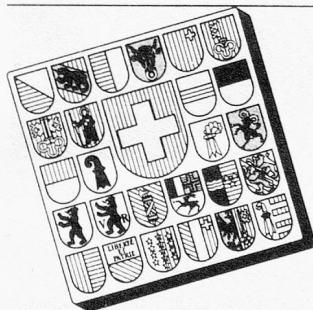
Under the terms of the arrangement concluded with the Egyptian authorities on 21st January 1980, assets frozen in the Arab Republic of Egypt on non-transferable bank accounts held by non-resident Swiss nationals, and by corporate bodies which have their registered offices in Switzerland and are controlled by Swiss interests, **have been released**. The Financial and Economic Service of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne has been instructed to implement this arrangement.

New chance for children of Swiss women

Earlier this year information was given here about the new chance for children of Swiss women and whose parents at the time of birth had permanent residence in Switzerland to acquire Swiss nationality.

The period during which an application can be submitted to the competent authorities of the mother's canton of origin runs from 1st May 1980 to 30st April 1981. Further details can be obtained from Swiss embassies and consulates, or from the Federal Department of Justice and Police, CH-3003 Berne.

Swiss National Day Fund



1st of August 1980

When celebrating the foundation of our country, it is appropriate to remember the spirit of our forefathers of mutual help and assistance. This also is the goal of the Swiss National Day Fund. The proceeds of this year's collection will be shared between the Swiss Association for the construction and maintenance of hiking paths and the Swiss Society for the Assistance to Mothers (Wanderwege und Mütterhilfe).

Enrolment at Swiss universities of Swiss holders of foreign matriculation certificates

Preliminary Remarks

Recognition by the Federal Matriculation Commission of foreign certificates obtained by Swiss nationals with a view to studying medicine or entering the Federal Institutes of Technology is governed by the Federal Council regulations of 17th December 1972. The following comments concern enrolment at the cantonal universities.

1. Enrolment at Swiss universities is based on the matriculation certificate. A Swiss applicant holding a foreign certificate is subject to the same conditions as a foreign applicant holding such a certificate.
2. However, this equality of treatment is limited insofar as the Swiss applicant must prove that he is a «genuine» Swiss from abroad, i.e. that he – or his parents – has a permanent residence abroad. For example, a Swiss applicant resident in Basle cannot be enrolled on the strength of an «Abitur» obtained in the Federal Republic of Germany which would enable him to matriculate there.
3. The Swiss universities do not recognize all foreign matriculation certificates which would admit their holders to universities in the countries concerned without a further examination. This applies particularly to diplomas issued by specialized secondary schools such as commercial schools, technical schools, etc. Swiss abroad are therefore strongly advised **to inquire in good time of the Swiss university of their choice** whether their matriculation certificate will entitle them to enrol there without an entrance examination.
4. A Swiss who obtains a foreign matriculation certificate in Switzerland (this is possible at some private schools) *cannot* enrol at a Swiss university on the strength of that certificate.

**Central Office
of the Swiss Universities**