

Spotlights

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Switzerland's press, radio and television not only report the news – they sometimes make it as well. This round-up by Colin Farmer spotlights some of the recent happenings back home in which the media made their own headlines.

ZURICH police minister Hans Frick has accused Swiss television of adopting a "clearly hostile" attitude towards the police and has withdrawn from a TV debate on confrontation between youth and the state.

The minister said he was prepared to answer questions concerning police action during recent youth demonstrations in Zurich "but not for a medium which grossly contravenes the basic principles of fair and objective reporting."

A Swiss TV spokesman said the minister's withdrawal from the programme was regretted – "particularly after he had agreed to participate" – and that Mr Frick had missed an opportunity to contribute to a frank and open debate.

The three-and-a-half-hour programme included filmed reports from Switzerland, Britain and Berlin comparing police action in the three trouble spots.

Earlier this year police detained a three-man Swiss TV team alleged to have helped young demonstrators build street barricades, and the Swiss Radical Party – one of the partners in the country's coalition government – accused Swiss radio personnel of "constantly siding with demonstrators against the police and authorities."

A leading official of the Swiss Journalists' Association has condemned any attempts by the authorities to put pressure on the news media, but he also warned

journalists that their Press card was not a licence for "provocative behaviour and arrogance."

Spy interview

A FORMER senior Swiss army officer serving an 18-year prison sentence for spying did not contravene regulations by giving a newspaper interview while on temporary leave, the Swiss government has ruled.

Ex-Brigadier Jean-Louis Jeanmaire, sentenced in 1977 for spying for the Soviet Union, was allowed home last December to spend Christmas with his family.

While at home he gave an interview to Blick in which he claimed that Justice Minister Kurt Furgler had been responsible personally for his conviction, and that he had not given away any secrets of importance.

'Secrets' fine

A JOURNALIST on Switzerland's top-selling daily newspaper has been fined the equivalent of £200 sterling and ordered to pay a similar amount in costs for publishing extracts from a confidential report on Swiss secret service activities.

Reporter Jurg Zbinden, of

Blick, is to appeal against the Zurich court's decision and says he may take his case to the Swiss Federal Appeals Court. If that fails, he will consider appealing to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

Mr Zbinden obtained the confidential report last year from a Swiss Member of Parliament who said he wanted to draw attention to security leaks in the Defence Ministry. The MP's parliamentary immunity prevented him from facing possible legal proceedings.

TV team attacked

THREE British TV cameramen have been attacked, tied up and sprayed with paint and ketchup while attempting to film Zurich's autonomous youth centre.

The three were members of a six-man team filming a 15-minute documentary on Switzerland for United States television. The team was led by veteran CBS producer Al Wassermann and also included two Swiss crewmen. The material was intended for the CBS magazine programme "60 Minutes," which attracts an average weekly audience of 40 million viewers.

The AJZ youth centre became the focal point of violent demon-

strations in Zurich when it was closed by the city authorities for six months after police reported finding drugs and weapons on the premises. The centre was re-opened earlier this year.

The CBS team received permission to film the centre but soon after entering the premises the team was attacked by masked youths, tied to a post for 15 minutes and sprayed with paint and ketchup. The team had their film destroyed, and on being released they found their car tyres had been slashed.

Anti-British demo

A SWISS journalist, arrested during an anti-British demonstration in Zurich, is to be charged with disturbing the peace and threatening a police officer.

Martin Enkelmann, a reporter with the left-wing daily Volksrecht (Right of the People), was detained by police during a protest demonstration against British government policy in Northern Ireland. His newspaper claims he was seized while "pursuing his journalistic activities." But police allege that he caused a disturbance at a restaurant, threatened a police officer with a knife and did not identify himself as a journalist.

Enkelmann was detained for six days during which, he claims, he was beaten by police. A police spokesman said the journalist was taken to hospital – for treatment of a headache.

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