

The trial of Marcel Keiser

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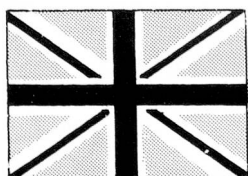
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Union Jack is flying high

Cultivating English gardens ...

"ENGLISH Gardens" was the title of a highly successful three-week exhibition staged recently at Berne's Elfenau Park.

Held under the patronage of British Ambassador Sidney Giffard, the exhibits consisted of more than 40 photographs and other documentation relating to English landscape gardening, including some of the nation's finest public and private parks.

All the exhibits were the work of Swiss landscape gardener and architect Richard Arioli, now 76, who in 1970 retired after 30 years as City of Basle municipal

gardener.

During his long and distinguished career — which also included seven years in the city of Winterthur — Mr Arioli visited hundreds of historic gardens throughout Europe and overseas. He has been in England on many occasions.

It was the information gained and the photographs taken on these visits which formed the basis for his Berne exhibition. The

Englische Gärten



Berne display proved so popular that a similar exhibition by Mr Arioli is being planned for Basle this spring.

The trial of Marcel Keiser

IS a Swiss journalist who publishes military secrets and thus helps to reveal defects in the Defence Ministry a traitor?

This question was examined by a military court in canton Zurich last week. The court says No, Mr Marcel H. Keiser is no traitor and his motives were honourable.

But the court, nevertheless, found Mr Keiser guilty on one of six charges and gave him a suspended sentence of 30 days imprisonment for negligently violating military secrets.*

Mr Keiser writes for the German-language Swiss weekly, Die Weltwoche. He is particularly interested in military questions, and the president of the court said the articles he published over the past few years showed that he had a positive attitude towards the army.

He was prosecuted in connection with a series of articles he wrote on the Swiss Defence Ministry's Intelligence Service.

The deliberations of the military court were held behind closed doors and no details on the charges have been published.

* *Fahrlässige landesverräterische Verletzung militärischer Geheimnisse*

It is, therefore, not known on what charge Mr Keiser was found guilty.

The matter goes back to a Swiss spy scandal. Two years ago, a Swiss spy was caught in neighbouring Austria, a country with which Switzerland has very friendly relations.

The spy was caught during Austrian army manoeuvres, which were attended by an official Swiss delegation. He had been sent on his mission by a controversial Intelligence Service official, Mr Bachmann, who has in the meantime left the Defence Ministry.

Mr Bachmann has never been prosecuted. But a parliamentary working group has studied his activities and concluded that, though a person of integrity, he was not suited for his post as head of two sections within the Intelligence Service. Even the Defence Minister, Mr Chevallaz, was quoted as saying that certain people in the Intelligence Service seemed to be playing cowboys and Indians.

The parliamentary group criticised the fact that Mr Bachmann was allowed to run a private intelligence service parallel to his official functions. The investi-

gations showed that Mr Bachmann had also spent public money on studies for setting up a possible base for a Swiss government in exile in Ireland in the event of Switzerland being occupied.

Before the trial of Mr Keiser, the Swiss Journalists Association issued a strong protest. A general meeting of the association approved a resolution criticising the fact that a journalist was charged with treason in a case where others involved went without being charged. The resolution said the gravity of the charges against Mr Keiser suggested an attempt at intimidating journalists.

Similar criticism was voiced after the trial by the editor-in-chief of Die Weltwoche, Mr Staub, who was a witness in the trial. He said the trial created insecurity among journalists, who can no longer be sure what is secret and what isn't as far as defence matters are concerned.

He claimed that he had detected a certain malaise over the state of affairs even within the court. Mr Staub said the Defence Ministry's information policies should be adapted to reality.

Elsbeth Denzeisen