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Bulldozing the Zurich youth drug scene

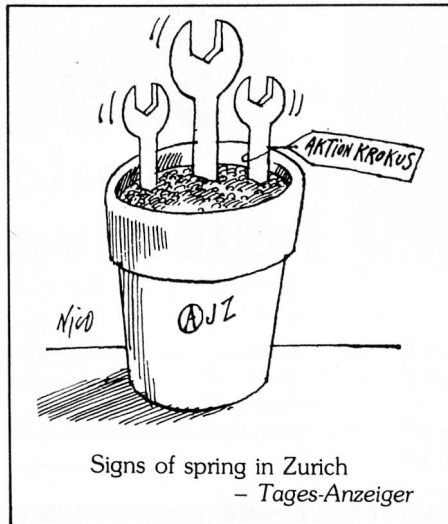
ZURICH authorities have launched a major anti-drugs drive by demolishing the city's autonomous youth centre, for the past two years the symbol of rebellious Swiss youth.

Under strong police protection, cranes and bulldozers have been tearing down the abandoned factory building, which was turned over to young protesters in 1980 in an attempt to defuse tension between them and the city authorities. The launching of the AJZ centre followed violent demonstrations against costly extensions to the Zurich Opera House and allegations by "counter culture" protesters that Swiss society had become callous and uncaring in its attitude to youth.

The AJZ venture began as a self-administered meeting place, and inspired similar centres in several other Swiss cities. But it also became, in the words of the police, the number one centre for crime and drugs abuse in Switzerland.

During the first three months of this year alone Zurich police arrested or questioned nearly 200 suspected drugs dealers or traffickers – most of them operating in or around the AJZ centre. The suspects came from countries including Tunisia, Morocco, Turkey, Italy, Thailand, the United States, Israel and Switzerland (including a Swiss woman). But police admit that even despite these considerable successes the drugs scene at the AJZ centre continued to flourish.

"The reason, quite simply, is that we have been lacking sufficient personnel", a police spokesman explained to Zurich's *Tages-Anzeiger*. "We have an anti-drugs squad of 14 specialists, assisted by seven other police



officers. This group will soon be strengthened. But it takes three to four men to keep a single suspect under observation, and this team has to be relieved every six to eight hours. At this moment we have been unable to follow up 30 valuable tip-offs because we don't have enough people."

The spokesman, replying to criticism of apparent police inaction, said the public failed to understand "that we cannot simply pick up someone off the street and ask him where he gets his drugs from. In most cases the small man doesn't even know the name of the person he is buying from."

The spokesman said Zurich Airport also lacked sufficient specialist personnel to enforce proper control of the more than

20,000 passengers who pass through the airport on average every day. "Searching for drugs at the customs has become a needle in a haystack operation", he said.

According to police figures, Canton Zurich has nearly 5,000 heroin addicts alone, using some half a million francs' worth of the drug every day.

Newly-elected city Mayor Thomas Wagner told a public meeting: "The demolition of the AJZ youth centre doesn't mean that the drugs problem has disappeared. On the contrary, it is still the number one worry facing our city. The Zurich troubles of the past two years have left their traces. All-out efforts are now needed if the name of our city is to regain its once proud and positive reputation in the countries and continents of the world."

But with addicts now deprived of their AJZ centre and facing a determined anti-drugs drive by police, Zurich could be in for a tough, tense summer.

★ ★ ★

THREE British geologists have been presented with a major international award in Switzerland for their revolutionary research into oceanic evolution.

They are Dan McKenzie, reader in tectonics at Cambridge University, Drummond Matthews, reader in marine geology at Cambridge University, and Frederick Vine, professor of environmental sciences at the University of East Anglia, Norwich.

At a ceremony in Berne they were presented jointly with a Sfr 250,000 (£70,000) Balzan Prize by Swiss Interior Minister Hans Hürlimann. Mr Hürlimann said the three British researchers had made "remarkable and revolutionary scientific contributions to our conception of the earth's history."

Balzan Prizes are awarded annually by a joint Swiss-Italian foundation for "humanitarian achievements in the fields of the arts and sciences." Previous winners have included Mother Theresa and the late Pope John.

★ ★ ★

THE luck of the Irish has run out for Swiss soccer. On March 17 – St Patrick's Day – the Neuchâtel Xamax club was eliminated by Hamburg from the UEFA Cup competition, which has never been won by a Swiss club.

In previous rounds giant-killing Xamax



British scientists John Vine, Drummond Matthews and Dan McKenzie have received a joint £70,000 award in Switzerland (see this page).

... reporting from Berne



(the club was founded only in 1970) had shaken the soccer world by defeating such European elite as Sparta Prague, Sporting Lisbon and Malmö of Sweden. Even in the first leg of the quarter-final tie in Hamburg, Xamax twice held the lead before losing 3-2. But Hamburg forced a 0-0 draw in the return game in Switzerland to win on aggregate and reach the last four.

The Irish connection? Neuchâtel Xamax centre forward Don Givens, one of the driving forces behind the team's rags-to-riches rise, hails from the emerald isle. It was Givens who scored the first shock goal in Hamburg – and who then hit the post in the later stages of the goalless game in Neuchâtel.

The 32-year-old Irish international played previously with Manchester United, Luton, Queen's Park Rangers, Birmingham City and Sheffield United before opting for the continent when the Sheffield club was relegated to the 4th Division. He has a two-season contract with Neuchâtel, but would like to extend his stay for another few years before retiring from the game and returning to settle in the Birmingham area.

How does he compare Swiss soccer with the game in Britain? "I would say that the best four clubs in Switzerland could compete very well at British level. But overall, footballers lead an easier life in Switzerland.

The fans are not so fanatic, and the players are under less psychological and physical pressure."

★ ★ ★

SWITZERLAND is to tighten its regulations on motor car exhaust emissions, Federal President Fritz Honneger has announced.

Speaking at the opening of the Geneva Motor Show, Mr Honneger said; "Since it has not been possible to work out on a Europe-wide basis regulations corresponding with our own conceptions, the government here is determined to strengthen controls concerning exhaust emissions".

The stringent new standards, which have been strongly criticised by manufacturers, will

take effect from October of this year.

Mr Honneger said the motor car had become "the number one means of transport but also the number one environmental problem."

He added: "It is the motor car which makes the most noise and takes up the most space. It is also the motor car which, after air transport, uses most energy per person. The motor car gives us certain freedom but it also endangers our freedom to live in an intact environment."

In the long term, said President Honneger, the motor car only made sense "provided it is less harmful to the environment, and other means of transport are assured a proper place."

SWISS SOCCER

Football League tables up to and including April 6

'A' Division	Pl	W	D	L	Gls	Pts
Servette	21	17	2	2	62:21	36
Zürich	21	12	8	1	36:14	32
Grasshoppers	21	12	7	2	44:16	31
Xamax	21	11	7	3	41:17	29
Sion	21	10	6	5	39:26	26
Young Boys	20	10	5	5	34:28	25
Lucerne	20	9	2	9	35:35	20
Basle	21	7	5	9	29:30	19
St. Gallen	20	7	3	10	26:33	17
Vevey	21	4	9	8	28:35	17
Aarau	20	5	6	9	30:39	16
Bulle	21	4	8	9	23:37	16
Bellinzona	22	5	6	11	24:47	16
Lausanne	21	4	6	11	23:36	14
Chiasso	22	3	5	14	14:51	11
Nordstern	21	4	1	16	20:53	9

'B' Division	Pl	W	D	L	Gls	Pts
Wettingen	21	12	8	1	42:20	32
Winterthur	19	13	4	2	44:16	30
Chênois	20	10	6	4	33:18	26
Grenchen	20	8	8	4	36:25	24
Biel	21	7	10	4	33:28	24
Lugano	21	9	5	7	40:32	23
La Chaux-de-F	18	8	6	4	35:21	22
Mendrisiostar	20	9	4	7	32:41	22
Ibach	21	6	10	5	29:31	22
Locarno	21	7	6	8	40:32	20
Fribourg	21	5	7	9	26:32	17
Berne	21	6	5	10	31:42	17
Aurore	20	4	6	10	18:46	14
Altstätten	21	2	8	11	17:38	12
Frauenfeld	21	2	7	12	18:40	11
Monthey	20	2	6	12	17:30	10

Lines separate championship leader, relegation and promotion zones.