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President's Report

Swiss Federal Railways

An large section of the Swiss public opposes the SBB plans for reducing regional traffic. The Cantonal Governments of Thurgau and St.Gallen have protested and a new association *Pro Bahn* has been formed with the declared intention of having the same sort of lobby in Parliament as the road and farming associations. There are even Members of Parliament openly demanding a second vote on Bahn 2000 and possibly *Alptransit*. They are of the opinion that the cut-down Bahn 2000 and the cuts in regional traffic are not the project the Swiss people approved. A wide circle of opinion holds the correct opinion that the Swiss Federal Railways did nothing properly to research the possibilities of rationalisation.

For the reduced Bahn 2000 the SBB has invited several foreign and Swiss firms to tender for double-decked passenger coaches for IC traffic. In all the SBB plan to purchase for the revised Bahn 2000 130 class Re4/4 460 locomotives, 400 double-deck IC passenger coaches and 45 passenger trains with active tilting body technology, together with 60 control trailers for conventional trains. The amount budgeted for this stock is Sfr.3300 million, whilst the SBB will abandon the construction of all new lines except Mattstetten-Rothrist. The project is now estimated to cost SFr.8 billion and to be completed in 205.

Whether the abandoned lines will be built at a later date depends widely on the success of the reduced project, the increase in traffic realised and above all, the financial results achieved. Already today, the SBB believes that and additional SFr.333 million in subsidies will be necessary during the first years. Whether the net proceeds will rise by 26% is doubtful, especially in view of the proposed cuts in regional traffic which provides at present 31% of the passengers of IC traffic.

Uster and Frauenfeld stations will undergo a complete modernisation.

The SBB and SNCF have formed a joint company for the TGV Paris - Switzerland service. The SBB will order one TGV train for this.

Class 460

Faulty functioning of the permanent magnetic brake has led the SBB to stop hauling IC trains with this class until September 1993; the fault has now been corrected. Visitors to Switzerland can see this class hauling special trains, mostly freight.

There are currently many tests under way to optimise many components to obtain even better results. It has been found that the concept of the class 460 has an enormous potential and the locomotive industry is equipping one engine for a demonstration tour of Germany and Norway and possibly Austria and Denmark. India has already placed an order for 30 locomotives similar to those used by the SBB.

Alptransit

Both the Gotthard and Lötschberg tunnels will be constructed with twin single track bores with connecting galleries at regular intervals.

Mittel-Thurgau-Bahn (MThB)

The MThB has been entrusted with the passenger service on the DB Konstanz - Engen route and will order 4 NPZ trains for this purpose.

Montreux-Oberland-Bernoise (MOB)

The new *Crystal Panoramic Express* has been well received by the public and it is easy to predict ever-rising passenger numbers.

The Interlaken - Zweisimmen mixed gauge project has been under discussion recently. According to a group of private investors, a service of Crystal Panoramic type stock between Luzern and Montreux would be highly profitable. However the SBB, BLS and MOB refuse to pass over the profit to a private company whilst only receiving an amount to cover their maintenance costs.

Industry

Migros, the largest food retailer in Switzerland, with a turnover of SFr.15 billion, is pioneering the Combi-Trailer in Switzerland. As members probably know, the Combi-Trailer was first used in the USA. The semi-trailers

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The Märklin HO gauge Eichhof Braugold wagon.

Visiting the Eichhof Brewery

by R.I. Smith

During our holiday to Luzern last year, we earmarked the local Eichhof brewery for a visit, should there be rain one day. It did rain, so off we went, taking the trolleybus line which has a stop at the brewery. We wandered in; there is no security gate or barrier; noting the tracks, wagon turntables and their distinctive two-axle vans. On enquiring about a conducted tour, the receptionist explained that they require a week's notice in order to ensure that an English-speaking guide would be available, but that if we wished we could sample their excellent beer free of charge. Naturally we thought that this was a very acceptable alternative and, armed with a voucher, we strolled across to the canteen.

The staff were preparing lunch for the workers, but were not at all bothered by us. The man behind the counter pointed to some extremely large (2-litre) beer mugs, we declined since drinking that quantity would probably have put us out of action for the rest of the day, and settled for a more discreet size of glass. The canteen is set out as a bierkeller, with long tables flanked by benches and with murals depicting people working, all adding to the ambience.

After our beer we examined their showcase which included glasses, bottles and clothes all stamped with the Braugold logo as well as the Märklin HO 2-axle van in the latest version of the Eichhof Braugold livery. The price was considerably lower than in the model shops in town and I would strongly recommend anyone visiting Luzern to combine the beer, interesting railway layout with private owner wagons and the cut-price Märklin wagons in one visit.

Maybe this year we will actually visit the brewery!

President's Report

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and their loads are locked with a bogie at each end, their tyres being retracted. Migros now forms entire trains which start their journeys from their distribution centres in a five-year trial in Ticino, Chur and Geneva, where the semi-trailer trucks serve their subsidiaries. Migros hopes to cut its transport costs in this fashion and intends to rely even more on rail transport.