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5th International Congress of the Knitting Industries



Réception au château de Heidegg sur le lac de Baldegg.
Reception at Heidegg Castle on Lake Baldegg.
Recepción en el castillo de Heidegg sobre el lago de Baldegg.
Empfang im Schloss Heidegg am Baldeggersee.

This important congress, held under the auspices of the honorary president, Mr. Thomas Holenstein, President of the Swiss Confederation, took place in Lucerne from June 12th to 14th, 1958. The meetings were presided over by Mr. C.A. Ronus (Handschin & Ronus "Hanro", Liestal). In addition to Swiss knitting manufacturers, there were representatives from 12 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany (Federal Republic and Berlin "Land"), Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States.

The programme of the congress was not too full, which

enabled the points on the agenda to be dealt with in greater detail; the topics for discussion included collective propaganda, quality control in the knitting industries and an extension of international statistics. With regard to the last question, the chairman, Mr. H. Kennewell (GB), pointed out that a more widespread dissemination of statistics concerning knitted articles would make it possible to keep better informed about production and consumption and, consequently, to determine more accurately the needs of the market. Congress members also heard Professor A. Bosshardt, head of the Exporters Association of the Swiss Clothing Industry (Zurich), talk on "The Effects of the Common Market and the Free Trade Area on the European Knitting Industries" and another interesting talk by Professor H. Rieben (Lausanne) on "The Integration of Europe". But the most important achievement of the congress was undoubtedly the adoption of the Code of Fair Trading to which we are devoting a few lines below.

The 5th International Congress of the Knitting Industries was extremely well organised by a special committee drawn from the Swiss Knitwear and Hosiery Manufacturers Association; a programme for the ladies, a number of receptions and entertainments of different kinds as well as a very enjoyable luncheon for the press contributed to the great success of the meeting.

A Code of Fair Trading

The principal achievement of the 5th International Congress of the Knitting Industries was its adoption, on June 12th, 1958, of an international Code of Fair Trading, which had been worked out over a long period beforehand by the trade organisations of the countries concerned, i.e. all those mentioned above except for the United States, which was represented at the congress merely by observers. The most striking feature, apart from the Code itself, is the spirit of co-operation shown by the twelve national associations in their adoption of the Code, which compelled them to rise above their individual interests for the sake of the common good.

The code itself, drawn up in English, French and German, will be of invaluable assistance to the knitting industry and trade, as is immediately clear from the text of its article 2, which states:

"For the protection of both traders and consumers, the national trade federations have compiled a glossary of terms in common use and rules for their proper use."

The first part of the code contains a definition of the terms in common use in the knitting industry and the second lays down the rules for their use. Both terms and rules apply to all stages of manufacture and trade, especially the description of goods and all forms of



De g. à d. / v. l. n. r. : Dr A.C. Jas, chef de la délégation néerlandaise / Leiter der niederländischen Delegation. — Dr W. Staehelin, Zurich, conseiller juridique de l'Assoc. suisse des fabricants de bonneterie / Rechtsberater des schw. Wirkereivereins. — M. Ch.A. Ronus, Liestal, président d'honneur de l'Assoc. suisse des fabricants de bonneterie / Ehrenpräsident des schw. Wirkereivereins.



De d. à g. / v. r. n. l. : Mme Marina Staehelin, Zurich. — Dr P. Giezendanner, Zurich, directeur de l'organisation de protection du crédit de l'industrie textile / Geschäftsführer der Kreditschutzorganisation der Textilindustrie. — Prof. E. Häyrynen, Helsinki, prof. au Polytechnicum / Prof. an der Technischen Hochschule.

advertising. Whatever reservations may be made by certain national associations as a result of existing legal provisions (but applicable only to the home market of the country in question with regard to home produc-



tion and imports), it can be said that the adoption of the code represents a great step forward. The confusion at present existing in the description of materials and qualities is never to the advantage of the consumer; thanks to the wisdom and vision of twelve national groups, we shall certainly see a most welcome simplification of the technical and commercial terminology, from which manufacturers and retailers will not be the last to benefit. This decisive move is all the more welcome as it is only a beginning and will certainly be followed by lasting good effects. In its article 7, the code states in fact: "The national trade federations will jointly verify from time to time whether amendments or additions are necessary."

The Code of Fair Trading does not contain any cartels or obligatory regulations but merely guiding principles. The only guarantee for the observance of these principles is the sense of honour of the signatory national associations and their members. Sanctions are not foreseen but whoever does not observe the terms and customs determined stamps himself as an unfair tradesman. It is conceivable that, in future legal proceedings concerning unfair competition, the Code will also be consulted by national courts for the interpretation of trade terms and customs.

De d. à g. / v. r. n. l. : M. et Mme Pelet, « La Maille S.A. », Lausanne. — Mme S. Volet, Lausanne, service de presse de l'Assoc. suisse des fabricants de bonneterie / Pressedienst des schw. Wirkereivereins.

De g. à d. / v. l. n. r. : M. et Mme U. Reber, « Victor Tanner A.G. », Saint-Gall. — Mme Larsen.

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