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From Solferino to Sarajevo

On the occasion of the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent (December 3-7, 1995), the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum in Geneva looks back at the history of these meetings. Called "The Humanitarian Endeavour – From Solferino (1859) to Sarajevo (1995)", the exhibition illustrates all the conferences held so far, describing the participants and their countries of origin together with all important decisions taken and subjects treated. The humanitarian achievements of the Red Cross since its foundation are presented in the form of a stamp collection. In addition, today's Red Cross activities can be followed on interactive screens.

The exhibition covers the last 130 years of the world's history with all its positive and negative points. These include the steady expansion of humanitarian law as well as the difficulties in enforcing it which have had to be overcome. Since the first conference in 1863, which was also held in Geneva, the number of signatory states to the Geneva Conventions has risen from less than 20 to 185; and over the same period the number of conference participants has grown from just 50 to over 1,000.

The exhibition, at the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum, 17 avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva, lasts until May 27, 1996. Opening hours: daily, except Tuesdays, from 10:00–17:00.

People

● **Stelio Molo**, director general of Swiss Radio and Television Corporation (SRG) from 1972–1980, has died at the age of 79. This Ticinese, who spoke three languages with equal fluency, was awarded the Great Federal Cross of Merit for his work in improving relations between Switzerland and Germany.



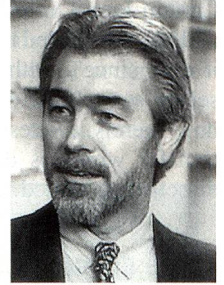
● Changeover in Swissair's management: on January 1 **Philippe Bruggisser** became operational managing director of the company and is due to replace Otto Loepfe as group chairman in 1997. As chairman of the board Bruggisser turned Swissair Holdings into a profitable subsidiary, and it is hoped that he will do the same for the parent company.



● **Erhard Lorétan** has now climbed 8,586-metre high Kangchenjunga, which means he has scaled all 14 "eight-thousanders" in the space of 13 years. This 36-year old from Fribourg is regarded as a pioneer of high-speed expeditions in extreme conditions with minimum equipment. He reached the top of all these peaks without using extra oxygen.

● On May 1 of this year **Hans Meyer** of Aargau will succeed Markus Lusser as president of the Swiss National Bank (SNB). He moves up from second place and will be the 11th president in the Swiss central bank's history.

● Agronomist **Hans Herren** has been given the 1995 World Nutrition Prize. Valaisan by birth, he received this award – which is worth 200,000 dollars – for his pioneering work in biological pest control. He is at present director of the Institute for Insect Physiology and Ecology in Nairobi, Kenya.



● Writer and publicist **Hans Werner Hirsch**, better known as **Peter Surava**, has died at the age of 83. He is regarded as the first reporter on social matters in Switzerland and stirred up muddy waters by his uncompromising stance against Nazism.

New banknotes



A new 50-franc note has recently come into circulation. Sophie Taeuber-Arp is the first woman to be featured on a Swiss banknote. New 10, 20, 100 and 200 franc notes will appear over the next two years. This will be the first ever 200 franc note, and it will replace the 500 franc note.

Snippets

● On the occasion of the 3rd Conference of Youth Parliaments, an umbrella organisation to coordinate the activities of Switzerland's 36 municipal and cantonal youth parliaments was established. At the same time it was decided to hold an annual meeting of delegates.

● Two Swiss astronomers, Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz of Geneva University, have discovered the first planet outside our solar system. It has not yet been named, is 42 light years away and comparable to our sun.

● Switzerland Tourism, formerly Swiss National Tourist Office, has concluded

a five-year cooperation agreement with the country's twelve tourism regions. The aim is to strengthen Switzerland's image in the face of international competition. The agreement covers planning and coordination of stands at fairs and exhibitions, as well as advertising and promotion.

● Maternity insurance, which has been required by the federal constitution for the last 50 years, should finally be realised soon. Federal Councillor Ruth Dreifuss, who is responsible for such matters, is about to present a bill to parliament. The main problem not yet solved is how to finance it: either from salary deductions or from value added tax.

Another success for Swiss soccer players



Another success for Roy Hodgson (inset) and the Swiss soccer team: European Cup qualification. An important milestone was Kubilay Türkyilmaz' 1:0 against Hungary last October.

After coming top in its five-nation group, the Swiss association football team has made it to the 8th European Cup which will be held in England from June 8-30. After qualifying for the 1994 World Cup this is its second big success within a short period. Before that Switzerland had not played in any international championship since 1966. Its team will be up against England, Scotland and the Netherlands. Those coming

in first and second in each group will qualify for the quarter finals.

The success of the Swiss team is largely due to its English coach, Roy Hodgson. After taking over the job on January 1, 1992, he gave the team a clear line of tactics which has been followed consistently. This has made it feel more self-confident, so that even when star players have not been available its performance has not often dropped

below average. The coach also benefited from the fact that some of his key players transferred to top clubs abroad and were able to bring to the national team added experience in the international game.

In November last year Roy Hodgson followed the example of such players and became trainer of the top Italian club, Inter Milano. He has been succeeded as national coach by Artur Jorge. ■

Homeland stays for Swiss Abroad children

Our offer for 1996:

- a stay in our holiday camp in summer or over New Year;
- a holiday in a Swiss host family;
- subsidised travel costs for Swiss Abroad children coming to Switzerland for the first time.

The scheme is for 7-15 year olds of Swiss nationality or whose mother is Swiss. A contribution to costs of Sfr. 150.- is required for a stay with a host family, while the holiday camp is offered at cost price. An application may be made for a reduction in the contribution to costs or complete dispensation.

The deadline for registration for a stay in a host family or holiday camp is April 15, 1996. The travel cost subsidy is valid throughout the year. Please register at your Swiss diplomatic post (embassy or consulate).

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Paul Grüninger acquitted posthumously

Paul Grüninger has finally been rehabilitated – legally too! The former St. Gall police chief allowed thousands of Austrian Jews to cross the border into Switzerland illegally and was condemned for dereliction of duty in 1940 for his actions (see Swiss Review 6/95). He was rehabilitated politically in 1993, and the St. Gall district court has now completed the process by acquitting the refugee helper posthumously. ■

Points of view

"We have replaced idyllic Switzerland clichés with diabolic Switzerland clichés, which means we are now yodelling a negative tune. We were the best, and we have become the worst – but still want to be a special case! In this country nothing is more subversive than to say that we are just as average as everyone else".

"Switzerland has always regarded itself as a special case. But today it is faced with the same problems as other countries. Swiss people are becoming unsure of themselves and restless. And that is new".

Hugo Loetscher, writer, and Liesl Graz, correspondent of the British newsmagazine 'The Economist', on 'Switzerland as a Special Case'.

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Photos: Keystone/zvg