

Communications and culture

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Forty functionaries of the Swiss Foreign Office were employed exclusively in the task of looking after foreign interests. It created extra work for Embassies and Legations, specially those in Cairo and Havana. In the United Arab Republic the newly introduced measures created many legal problems, especially in connection with the considerable Turkish claims.

The Swiss Embassy in Cuba was able to visit the American political prisoners and to help them by sending food parcels and medical supplies. Most American residents in Cuba had decided to return to the USA last October, and the Swiss Embassy in Havana organised their repatriation.

An interesting figure was published in connection with the officials and employees of international organisations in Switzerland. In 1962 the number increased by 700 to 5,700. Of these 1,500 are Swiss citizens. Last year 59 permanent delegations and observer-missions were accredited to the European Headquarters of the United Nations. It can well be imagined the sort of administrative problems this causes Switzerland.

(Based on reports and news received by courtesy of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

COMMUNICATIONS AND CULTURE

On 14th March the 33rd International Motor Show opened in Geneva in the presence of Federal Councillor Spuehler, representatives of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps, the Army, and high political and juridical personalities. The Chairman of the *Salon*, Mr. Roger Perrot, pointed out that in 1947 305 exhibitors had taken part and 185,000 visitors had come. This year 1,112 exhibitors from twenty countries participated. A new exhibition hall was badly needed. On the other hand the Chairman expressed satisfaction that the Swiss roads were at last being improved, though not as fast as was desirable. He praised the new traffic regulations.

Federal Councillor Spuehler, as Minister for Railways and Postal Services, referred to the motor-car as symbol of the affluent society and talked about the problem of managing surplus wealth whilst in the developing countries it was still the old problem of how to overcome poverty and shortages. He pointed out that in Switzerland 25 milliards were invested in communications at the end of 1960, of which road communications alone accounted for 17 milliards, i.e. roads, garages, parking facilities, petrol stations and cars. Expenditure for motor traffic amounted to four times that used up by rail traffic. Federal Councillor Spuehler also announced that a new building programme would shortly be implemented, according to which the last alpine pass roads should be made dust-free. He also touched on the negative aspects of noise, air pollution and accidents. He concluded by putting the question whether we should not have to correct the present tendency by which our economic standards have pushed non-material values into the background. Thus, communications could become directly or indirectly a cultural factor of the first order.

(Based on reports received by A.T.S.)

NEW SWISS VILLAGES

A new village is to be built in the canton of the Valais, at the north entrance to the Great St. Bernard road tunnel. All the northern installations of the tunnel are concentrated at this spot: a 66,000-square-foot covered road station, housing the Italian and Swiss customs offices and check-points as well as offices for the tunnel staff, who will also be provided with accommodation in the village; in addition there will be a station buffet, probably a hotel and a garage as well as the lower station of an aerial cableway. This new village, which will be extremely busy with all the international road traffic passing through, is to be called Bourg-St. Bernard.

Molésion-Village is the name of a new tourist and winter sports resort to be built in Gruyère, with the backing of the local authorities, by a company which intends to build a model village there right from scratch, according to a carefully prepared overall plan. This new village, situated in an as yet undeveloped part of the Fribourg Fore-Alps at an altitude of 3,600 feet, at the foot of the Molésion, will comprise separate zones for the hotels, private chalets and camping ground, and is to be completely equipped with all the necessary installations and facilities: water supply, sewerage system, car parks, forest paths for walkers, a church, post office, restaurant, bank, shopping centre, swimming pool, sports ground, wide approach roads and two aerial cableways for skiers. Attractive terms will be offered those wishing to build a chalet in this beautiful district with its excellent ski-ing possibilities, provided of course their plans comply with the overall architectural plan laid down for the village.

[O.S.E.C.]

President

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