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# The Swiss Observer

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**The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain**

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## EXPO 1964

### THE SWISS NATIONAL EXHIBITION IS OVER

The EXPO 64 has closed its portals, the exhibition which created so much enthusiasm and caused so many heated discussions. Its success is beyond questioning. The statisticians will produce figures and comparisons, the financial experts present balance sheets, the "Golden Book" will remind us of an unforgettable experience. Today, we want to recall the last few weeks of the national show which came to an end on Sunday, 25th October.

Towards the end, there was an upsurge in attendance figures. Ten million visitors had been by the 6th October, and within the last fortnight of the duration the figure rose rapidly, what with many latecomers deciding to travel to Lausanne after all before it was too late, and many "old" visitors coming again to say a last nostalgic *adieu*. Children and old age pensioners were granted special reductions, and the Commune Presidents of the German-speaking cantonal capitals issued an appeal to the people to make a final effort. It was signed by Zurich's Municipal President Dr. Emil Landolt.

Many societies made their autumn excursion to the *Pays Vaudois* at the time of the grape harvest, and the shores of the Lac Léman never looked more inviting than in the glorious autumn sunshine, even though a nip in the air heralded winter, and the seagulls retired to the small lagoons around the "Path of Switzerland".

Since the last report of special events, the remaining Cantonal Days took place: Schaffhausen at the end of August and the Aargau Youth Day on 4th September; the Bernertag a week later brought an up to then record attendance of 145,000 and dulled somewhat the shock received the previous Sunday during the riots at Les Rangiers; it was Neuchâtel and Thurgau in September, the latter with one of the finest processions seen, and early in October, Grisons brought up the rear.

Other special events were the wine-growing festivals, and 5th September was celebrated as "Vineyard and Wine Day" in honour of Switzerland's extensive viticulture. Red Cross Day, the Day of the Horse, the Day of Country Planning were held in August, and the month finished with the Federal Costume Festival held the same week-end as the Assembly of the Swiss Abroad. September brought a visit of the Comédie Française, the Day of the Swiss Writers, and on the Federal Day of Prayer, an ecumenical service of the three national denominations took place, attended, in spite of rain, by a large congregation. The twelve winners of the competition "Our Country", held for all the Swiss schools abroad, were received the same

day, before they left Switzerland again for Bangkok, Alexandria, Genoa, Lima, Barcelona, or Rio de Janeiro. At the end of September, there was a postal balloon flight, and early in October, there was a cattle show, to be followed by the Day of Peace. The radio amateurs met on 13th, the 16th was reserved for Publicity, and the 18th was the Day of Health.

The foreign Press was highly complimentary, and visitors from all over the world arrived to inspect the vast national effort of the small country, statesmen, soldiers, artists, delegations of public bodies and renowned organisations, Royal and Imperial personages — October brought His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie to Lausanne. For a number of Swiss visitors it was the fourth national exhibition, and for one or two it was even the fifth — they remember Zurich of 1883.

Amongst the September visitors there was the oldest married couple in Switzerland. Seventy-seven years ago, Charles Burgat of St. Aubin, NE, got married, and now, at 100 years, he and his wife who is even a year older, the couple visited the EXPO. They, as well as their two daughters of 76 and 74, were collected at their home by the Secretary-General of the EXPO, and they enjoyed their visit very much indeed.

And so the show moved on to its finale. On Sunday, 25th October, thirty-two relief trains were run to the Vaudois capital by the SBB, and the record figure of 165,290 visitors was registered on the closing day, nearly 5,000 more than the highest "Landi" figure in 1939. The daily average was thus brought up to 65,000. The total of 11,728,706 is nearly one and a quarter million higher than in 1939. It would have been surprising, had it been otherwise, considering the increase in the population and the improvement in the means of transport. The success of the EXPO in no way minimises that of the National Exhibition in 1939.

The closing ceremony was fixed for 5 p.m. on the Sunday afternoon. Several hundred guests were invited to a reception. At 6 p.m., the last official performance of Heinrich Sutermeister's EXPO Cantata "Erkennen und Schaffen" was given at the EXPO theatre. Later, a procession moved to the "Place des Cantons" where the actual closing act was introduced by Hans Haug's EXPO March. A short ecumenical service followed, and the final speeches were made. The President of the EXPO, Councilor of States Despland, the Lausanne Municipal President Chevallaz, the Vaudois Government's President Guisan

and Federal Councillor Schaffner commented on the undoubted success of the big national show. The Vaudois President expressed thanks to the Federal Council for the honour of having been host to the EXPO whose "spirit must go on and carry fruit". Federal Councillor Schaffner described it as a national event which would go down into the history of the country and become a spiritual heritage for future generations.

The ceremony ended with the "Cantique Suisse", and to the sound of the EXPO church bells, the crowd dispersed in a nostalgic mood to spend a last evening on the site of the 1964 National Exhibition.

The EXPO 64 is over. Born under difficulties, beset with teething troubles, fighting through a laborious though promising adolescence, it matured late, and its full greatness and brilliance were fully acknowledged only in its later life. People, patterns, principles — the EXPO had to be literally conquered by the visitor — but how worthwhile it was!

(Figures from A.T.S.)

### PARLIAMENTARY AUTUMN SESSION

In our issue of 9th October, we reported on the main issue the Swiss Parliament had to face in the first week of the session, the "Mirage" affair. More will be published in the next number. In our last issue we informed readers of the latest progress regarding the Swiss Centre in London. Parliament was asked to grant the Swiss National Tourist Office an extraordinary subsidy of 3.8 million francs to extend their New York and London agencies. In addition, an interest-free loan of 5.3 million francs was proposed. It was accepted unanimously.

In his opening address, the President of the National Council referred to the disgraceful happenings at Les Rangiers, and later the report on economic measures *vis-à-vis* foreign countries was received from the Federal Council.

The second week began with a motion that the Confederation should no longer have to give consent for the establishment of bishoprics on Swiss territory. Business of great importance for the mountain farmers concerned increased subsidies for cattle holders. It will cost the Confederation between 36 and 41 million francs.

The next big issue was housing, which is very much tied up with the measures taken to stop the excessive economic boom in order to curb inflation. Several speakers stressed the importance that the construction of reasonably priced flats and houses must on no account be stopped. The present regulations come to a close at the end of the year, and a new proposal for increased social housing facilities was accepted by Parliament.

The debate on the Bill for the continuation of limited measures for price control took up three meetings. Price control covers rents, milk and dairy products and other goods vital for use inside Switzerland. Twenty speakers took part in the debate in which the crucial point was a possible easing of rent control. The electorate will have to vote on the new building proposals, and in the meantime Parliament has agreed to the proposed price control measures. In the debate on measures to curb the increased cost of living, both Federal Councillor Schaffner as Minister for Economic Affairs, and Federal Councillor Bonvin as Minister of Finance, made a speech of 75 minutes' duration each. The gist of their statements is that the increase has slowed down but is still going on, the danger of inflation is not yet over, discussions are still going on with the interested parties regarding lowering of customs tariffs, increase of savings, salaries and wages structure. A decrease in the demand for building land and houses has been registered.

The last week of the autumn session began with the final item still to be dealt with from the business report by the Federal Council for 1963. It concerns the former leader of the section "Heer und Haus", Dr. Vögeli who had been removed from his post. The National Council, seeing that the Federal Council has no "Verwaltungsgerichtsbarkeit", now had to consider an individual case. The punitive character of Dr. Vögeli's dismissal was removed, and thus the Federal Council's report for 1963 could be put aside.

The EXPO finances were discussed, and the loan of 18 million francs which the Confederation made in March, has now been changed into an interest-free advance. In July another such advance was made. Parliament has agreed without opposition — nobody is under the illusion that these sums will ever flow back into the federal treasury!

The revision of the law regarding the provisioning of the country with cereals was accepted after prolonged deliberations. Many were the motions, postulates and interpellations which were received and dealt with. They covered questions of defence, sport, supervision of banks, building of old age homes and flats, family allowances in agriculture, refuse disposal, tax defraudation, water, roads and railways, Nazi criminals and Egyptian arms dealers, compulsory paying-off of mortgages, ownership of flats and extension of aid in catastrophes.

In the final voting the following proposals were dismissed: Continued limited measures of price control (119:10), Increase of subsidies to cattle keepers in the mountain districts (148:0), Revision of military exception duty to include "Landsturmalter" (137:0).

The winter session will begin on 20th September.

(Based on news from A.T.S. and "Schweizerisches Kaufmännisches Zentralblatt".)

### SPORT

A mural at the National Exhibition in Lausanne reminded the visitor that one Swiss in ten is a marksman, one in sixteen a gymnast; one in thirty plays football, and one in fifty-four is a mountaineer. Much later come tennis and hockey, as well as other sports. It is interesting, therefore, that the medals brought back by the Swiss from Tokyo are in sports which don't figure in the table, equestrianism, rowing and judo. Sixty-nine strong the Swiss team went to Tokyo to compete in twenty-three events, and although there were some disappointments, particularly in gymnastics, shooting and athletics, one gold, two silver and a bronze medal are a very handsome return.

In the Grand Prix de Dressage, Sergeant-Major Henri Chammartin, riding a 13-year-old bay gelding "Woermann", born in Sweden, had, as "The Times" put it, "so smooth a test that they seemed to be floating from movement to movement. The pirouettes, piaffes and the passage of this pair were magnificent and would be hard to beat". The silver medal for the team was presented to Miss Marianne Gossweiler on "Stephan", Fw Henri Chammartin on "Woermann" and Wm Gustav Fischer on "Wald".

The second silver medal surprisingly went to the 25-year-old Eric Haenni from Delsberg in the very sport which originated in Japan and which figured for the first time at an Olympiad: judo (light weight).

The Zurich policeman Göpf Kottmann received the first medal for Switzerland in the Tokyo Games on his thirty-second birthday, a bronze for rowing (skiff).