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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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SWITZERLAND'S PARTICIPATION IN THE MONTREAL WORLD EXHIBITION

As early as January 1963, Switzerland was invited by the Canadian Government to participate at the World Exhibition in Montreal in 1967. Then, following the usual practice, the Swiss Federal Government instructed the "Swiss Office for the Development of Trade" Zurich and Lausanne in its capacity as the Swiss centre for exhibition matters, to find out whether Switzerland's economic and cultural circles would welcome a participation and if so to what extent they would be willing to help in setting up a Swiss section. The inquiry was carried out in two stages and encompassed 64 economic organisations in addition to 44 cultural societies associated with the "Pro Helvetia Foundation". The Government took the view that Switzerland should accept the invitation as all leading industrial countries would be represented at the Montreal Exhibition and as Switzerland had always maintained such close cultural relations and excellent trade and financial connections with Canada, and, last but not least, because a large and very active Swiss community is established in North America. Therefore at the end of 1964, the Federal Government announced its acceptance to participate.

The "Swiss Office for the Development of Trade" prepared a preliminary programme and estimated the cost to be about 13 million Swiss francs, which amount was subsequently approved by an Act of Parliament. The Swiss Federal Cabinet then appointed as Commissioner General Dr. Victor Nef, former Ambassador of Switzerland to Canada and his Deputy Dr. Roger Meizoz, Secretary of the SODT in Zurich.

For many years the volume of Canadian-Swiss trade has been quite constant. However, it is considerably larger today than before the war and is still increasing. In 1955, with Swiss imports from Canada totalling 26 million Canadian dollars and Swiss exports to Canada 19 million Canadian dollars, it has increased sixfold compared with the pre-war years. Ten years later, i.e. in 1965, Switzerland imported 42 million dollars worth of her own products. Agricultural produce, in particular wheat have for long been Canada's most important item of export to Switzerland (45% in 1965), ores and metal goods (19.9%), instruments (7.1%) and chemical and pharmaceutical products (6.6%). Swiss exports to Canada, on the other hand, consist mainly of watches (1965: 26.4%), chemical products (23.5%), machines and apparatuses (15.6%). However textiles and clothing (8.4%) and electrical equipment (8.1%) also occupy an important position, as well as cheese, chocolate and other milk products.

The Swiss pavilion in Montreal stands on a site beautifully situated and measuring some 38,000 square feet on

the tip of St. Helen's Island in the St. Lawrence River, near the pavilions of the Netherlands, Austria and Belgium, and close to the Metro-Station.

The plans for the Swiss building, which is air-conditioned, were conceived by Mr. Werner Gantenbein, architect in Zurich, who already had designed the Swiss pavilion at the Brussels 1958 World's Fair. He is assisted by two architects with wide experience in Canada, i.e. Mr. Georg Bank (Swiss) of Toronto and Mr. Georg F. Eber of Montreal. The pavilion measures about 100 by 200 feet and is from 35 to 75 feet high. The walls of the upper floor are made of red Canadian cedar. These panels and the special form give the pavilion a simple but attractively unconventional character.

Watchmaking, chemical products, the machinery industry and textiles are all on show in the Swiss pavilion. However, in addition to her display of the country's economic activities, Switzerland has taken special care also to present her various cultural aspects ("Man and his World"). The various problems (four national languages in one country) and achievements in this field, such as those closely tied up with Switzerland's position in the world today are presented. In this connection mention must be made of the general section situated on the ground floor, which provides information on the country, its beauty, its people; art is integrated in the form of metal sculptures and rotating cylinders with loud speakers.

The works of art and the general cultural section are seen through the glazed compound from the squares and streets. Generally, the open construction of the pavilion is calculated to arouse the curiosity of the passer-by and make the visitors in the building look as though they were animating the displays. There is also a library with a reading room and a record library.

A theatre on the second floor, accommodating some 500 visitors, is used for showing moving picture films, one of which having been made especially for the Swiss pavilion in the form of a trilogy (three parts lasting from 5 to 8 minutes each), devoted to Swiss scenery, the notion of Swiss precision and Swiss culture. The object is to inform visitors as fully as possible but also to foster goodwill toward Switzerland. ("Harmony, precision and creation" was shown for the first time in Zurich on 22nd June.) The theatre will also be used for other performances, lectures, etc.

The Swiss watch industry

In the Swiss Pavilion, the Watchmaking Section has at its disposal an area of 4,300 square feet, which accommodates a real treasury of the finest specimen of Swiss watch production.

As he approaches the industrial sector by way of an escalator and even before he enters the motion-picture theatre of the Swiss pavilion, the visitor is immediately struck by a group containing the "electronic time centre", controlled by an atomic clock of the cesium type. This is a time standard with a precision of the order of a millionth of a second per day, which is even smaller than that of astronomical time. As the precision of this atomic clock far exceeds the requirements of a time-distribution system, its usefulness for scientific and research purposes is illustrated by means of concrete examples.

The time centre is completed by a showcase containing a series of electronic timepieces, ranging from watches to quartz clocks, by way of desk watches and marine chronometers.

The prestige enjoyed by the Swiss watch industry throughout the world is also evidenced by the fact that it has been contracted to indicate and diffuse the Exhibition's official time. This is the object of the electronic time centre, which will control twelve tower clocks located in the various sectors of the Exhibition and in the amusement park. Moreover, all the official buildings of the Exhibition are provided with secondary clocks controlled by the Time Centre in the Swiss pavilion.

The display also includes a luminous-digit clock, i.e. a clock which indicates the hours, minutes, seconds and tenths of a second by means of luminous figures.

Another interesting exhibit is an independent portable transistorised receiving set designed by the Swiss Laboratory for Horological Research. This has a range of 900 to 1,250 miles and can be used for receiving, with a precision of a few ten-thousandths of a second, the time signals sent out by the Neuchâtel Observatory by way of the HBG transmitter at Prangins, in the form of audible signals and electronic impulses (the latter can be used for controlling a wide variety of accessory apparatus).

A continuously projected motion picture illustrates the centuries-old tradition peculiar only to the Swiss watch-making industry, as well as the masterpieces it has produced. Attention is also called to the efforts made in the scientific and technical fields with a view to maintaining its supremacy throughout the world (world watch exports: Switzerland, 47.8 million units in 1964 and 53.2 million units in 1965; all other countries, 14.9 million units in 1964).

In some twenty-five attractive showcases, visitors can admire the finest example of Swiss watch manufacture in all its variety and all its aspects.

It may also be mentioned that two Swiss companies are responsible for the official timing of the many sport events to be held throughout the duration of the Exhibition.

The Swiss chemical industry.

The Chemistry exhibit stands between the machinery and textile parts of the exhibition. From the middle of a space some twelve yards square rises a sculptured composition inspired by a molecular structure. This is intended to symbolise the world of chemistry. It is illuminated by moving, intermittently operating flood-lights, so that a variety of shadow effects is created on the otherwise empty walls. Around this focal point, and somewhat lower, are ranged the individual exhibits. The whole serves to demonstrate the many new products of world-wide significance in all fields of chemistry developed by the Swiss chemical and pharmaceutical industry over the last few decades. Thus it shows, how epidemics of malaria were

mastered with the aid of DDT insecticides. The compact, circular arrangement of the carefully chosen components of the exhibits eloquently illustrates the vigorous part played by the Swiss chemical and pharmaceutical industry in research.

The Swiss textile industry

On the upper floor of the Swiss pavilion the Swiss textile and clothing industry is staging a display of its finest products. Articles of high fashion are exhibited.

The colour framework is subdued (walls dark brown, floor black), and from the 20 ft.-high ceiling hang glass and aluminium objects reminiscent of stalactites. Cunningly-placed lighting gives these lofty metal shapes fascinating depth. From some of these part-tubular objects flow rivers of costly materials — silks, cottons, laces, embroideries — leading the eye downwards to a level where they broaden out into wide horizontal layers of display. Carefully harmonised with this show of textiles are the products of the Swiss clothing industry, ensembles of the greatest elegance, cocktail and evening dresses, fashion-wear for beach and bathing and delightful lingerie. The individual groups of clothing are complemented by the newest creations of the shoemakers.

These display surfaces, squares arranged leaf-like at various levels, have silk covered centres and coloured metal surrounds and look like oversized shawls spread flat. Each of these surfaces is in a colour combination matching the textiles, and the total effect is of a sonorous symphony of the colours of high fashion set off by the mysterious atmosphere of the hall with softened lights.

Deliberately, no attempt has been made to build up a theme of a literary of technical nature.

The lovely creations on display suffice to catch the eye and hold it. The entire design has one purpose only — to present as attractively as possible Swiss creative and industrial output in the field of fashion. It has been carefully laid out to take advantage of the impressive power of the high room.

The Swiss engineering industry

In its section of the Swiss pavilion, the engineering industry places its emphasis on electricity, illustrating both the facilities available in the generating field, whether hydro-electric, thermic or nuclear, and at the same time the closely allied field of power distribution. Another section is devoted to the possible applications of electrical energy in industry and private life. This display forms a logical transition to an exhibition of products from the remaining sectors of engineering.

The focal point of the display is a room in which the generation of electricity is shown photogrammetrically.

Other exhibits include original sections of particularly interesting objects, such as a Pelton wheel, a Kaplan turbine and the rotor of a gas turbine. Dominating the whole exhibit is a pneumatically-operated 750-kv high-speed circuit-breaker. To illustrate this somewhat abstract theme — which incidentally by reason of this very characteristic provides excellent opportunities for graphic representation — there are a number of scale models, including those of a thermal power station and a diesel engine. When selecting its theme, the engineering industry based itself on the fact that Switzerland has done much pioneering work in the field of power generation, and therefore continues to be highly regarded all over the world in this sector. It may also be mentioned that machinery and equipment for electricity supply and other products of electrical engineering make up the most important item in the export figures for machinery as a whole.

Restaurant

As most of the foreign pavilions have their own restaurant in Montreal, within the precincts of the Exhibition, it was only natural that Switzerland which, in this field, can boast some remarkable achievements, should do likewise. In fact, while Switzerland is considered the classical tourist country, we find hotelkeepers, gastronomic experts, chefs, waiters and other Swiss hotelkeeping personnel, who are appreciated for their skill all over the world. In short, the Swiss restaurant at the Montreal Exhibition represents hospitality and the culinary arts as practised in Switzerland. Mr. Albert Frossard, former Manager of the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Montreal has been appointed Manager.

The restaurant, housed on three different levels, has a seating capacity of about 200. The four linguistic regions of Switzerland are represented not only as regards decoration and setting but also choice of dishes. The Italian-speaking Ticino is represented in the basement by a dining-room resembling a typical "grotto", the Romanch Grisons and the German-speaking parts of Switzerland are on the ground-floor, and the French-speaking section on the mezzanine, the focal point being a big open stove for raclettes (the famous cheese speciality from the Canton of the Valais). In addition to local dishes and typical wines of these regions, all sections offer menus chosen to suit North-American tastes, prepared and presented with the greatest care and originality, unpretentious but excellent and original.

Swiss culture: contribution to the World Festival

The programme of cultural events, entertainment and sport — drama, music, lectures, folklore and sports events — planned for the duration of Expo 67, is the most varied and spectacular ever put on by a single town over a period of six months.

The Management of Expo 67, who have spared no efforts to achieve this result, nevertheless counted on the assistance of all countries taking part, within the measure of their possibilities. Switzerland is doing her share, and the programme includes performances by "Le Centre Dramatique Romand", concerts by the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande* conducted by Ernest Ansermet and Paul Klecki, recitals given by famous Swiss soloists, and concerts by the Chamber Orchestra of Collegium Musicum, Zurich, conducted by Paul Sacher. On the Swiss National Day and subsequent days early in August, there will be folklore performances by a group of 130 people from several regions of Switzerland.

In addition, a number of lectures are being given by well-known Swiss personalities.

Mention should also be made of the fact that the Switzerland Cheese Association, in co-operation with Chocolat Tobler have a privately operated Restaurant in the Amusement Section of the Exhibition, called "La Ronde" on the South-Eastern tip of St. Helen's Island.

This information has been given by Mr. Michel Vidoudez, Press-Attaché for Switzerland's Participation at the Expo Montreal, and it was sent from the Office of the Commissioner General for Switzerland in Montreal.

In the first few days, the Mayor of Montreal invited Municipal President Chevallaz of Lausanne, to thank him for the many valuable impulses received from the Swiss National Exhibition in 1964.

Mr. Albert Frossard, manager of the restaurant in the Swiss Pavilion at the Montreal Universal Exhibition 1967, has just been awarded the title of Commander of the Order of Hotelkeeping Merit on the occasion of the semi-annual

meeting of the Hotelkeepers Association of the province of Quebec, in Montreal. This honour bears witness to the great esteem enjoyed in Canadian hotelkeeping circles by the manager of the restaurant of the Swiss pavilion.

EXPO 1967 was opened on 28th April and will last till 27th October.

In many parts of Switzerland, celebrations take place to mark the Centenary of the Canadian Confederation.

RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

The following deaths have been reported from Switzerland:

Paul Kunz (80), Thun, former teacher in Aargau who took on the editorship of the "Oberländer Tagblatt"; was elected first full-time Municipal President of Thun in 1919 (—1925 and 1939 — 1952); member of the Bernese Cantonal Parliament from 1934 to 1948 (Liberal); on many communications and tourist organisations and Chairman of the Cantonal *Seminar-kommission* for 14 years; member of the National Council from 1947 to 1955.

Prof. Dr. Ernst Freudenberg (82), Basle, a refugee from Germany, he was given the Chair for *Kinderheilkunde* at Basle University in 1938 and appointed Director of the Children's Hospital; he kept both jobs with distinction until 1954; holder of many awards for pediatrics.

Raymond Waeber (64), Fribourg, Chief of the subscribers' department of the Fribourg Electricity Works; member of the Fribourg General Council and well known in sports circles; died on a staff excursion to Les Avants above Montreux.

Emil Boesch (83), St. Gallen, *Schulvorsteher* of St. Gall for many years; President and later Honorary President of the Swiss Houseowners Association.

Ernst Weber (86), Zurich, former President of the National Bank (1939 to 1947); from 1948, appointed by the Federal Council as Chairman of the Administrative Council of the Equalisation Fund of the Old Age and Dependents' Insurance.

Jules Bluntschli (71), Reinach (BL), former Commune President; member of the Cantonal Parliament since 1927; President of the R.C. Synod.

[A.T.S.]

A NEW BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH CENTRE IN BASLE

Ciba Ltd., the big Swiss chemical and pharmaceutical factory in Basle, has just inaugurated a new seventeen-storey building, in which it has installed its biological research centre staffed by some 400 research workers. Biological research, which also comprises experimental medicine, is becoming more and more important for the pharmaceutical industry. It should be pointed out that Ciba carries out research not only in the parent firm in Basle but also in its branches in the United States and Great Britain as well as, more recently, in its Indian branch, where only Indian scientists are employed.

[O.S.E.C.]