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The Swiss Observer

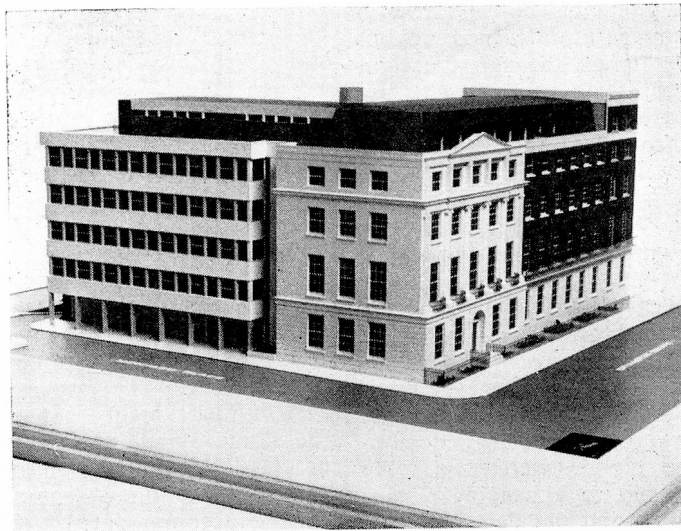
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FRIDAY, 23 MAY 1969

NEW SWISS EMBASSY IN LONDON



(By courtesy of Swiss Embassy.)

A cloud of dust as floor boards and bricks crash to the ground, just a couple of half-demolished walls — that was all there was left a couple of weeks ago of the once proud residence at 21 Bryanston Square and adjoining Montagu Place. But in a few weeks, building will begin of a new impressive Embassy and Chancellery on the old site, and when completed, the three buildings used at the moment (residence in Upper Brook Street, Embassy in Gloucester Place and Consulate in Montagu Place) will be under one roof.

The former residence facing Bryanston Square was constructed in 1810, when the Square was laid out on the Estate of Edward Berkeley Portman. In the 'twenties of this century, the two houses 21 and 22 were joined and they became the Swiss Embassy. It was the late Monsieur Paravicini, Swiss Minister for a quarter of a century, who managed to secure the freehold of the site, quite a remarkable achievement. In the war, the house adjoining no. 21, was destroyed by an incendiary bomb. The site was later taken over by the Swiss Government and has been used as a car park for Embassy officials and staff for a number of years.

As the Georgian façade had to be preserved, a solution had to be found

to combine the two blocks in an attractive way. As can be seen from the photograph of the model, the residential part consists of four storeys. On the ground floor, there are morning room and conference hall, on the first floor reception rooms, dining room and kitchen. The second floor will be reserved for the Ambassador's private quarters and for bedroom suites for official guests. The third floor will have work rooms and domestic staff quarters, whilst the top floor will house a canteen, meeting room, etc.

The building facing Montagu Place will have Reception, Chancellery and other offices on the ground floor, whilst the three floors above will be reserved for Embassy and Consulate offices. Three flats are planned for the fifth floor, and a library, telex room and technical offices will be on the top floor. Garages, archives and stores will be in the basement.

The whole area measures approximately 13,960 sq. ft. The Swiss Government has granted a credit of 11.7 million Swiss francs. Planning and Building is by the "Direktion der eidgenössischen Bauten" in Berne and Messrs. T. P. Bennet & Son, Chartered Architects in London. Construction time is expected to be 2 to 3 years.

HAPPY WHITSUNTIDE !

The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide.
Above the world is stretched the sky
No higher than the soul is high.
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand.
The soul can split the sky in two
And let the face of God shine through.
E. St. Vincent Millay.

LAUGHTER

It would be nice if the world would
learn
How to live and laugh again,
Look on the funny side of things,
Fling gloom and worry to the winds.

Laughing is a healthy habit,
Such a tonic and a gain,
Conquers ailments of the body,
Clears the cobwebs off the brain.

Some discern a laugh beneath them,
Common — simply isn't done.
Due to gloomy picklefaces
Often things go badly wrong.

Many grievances could be mended,
A timely smile surmount discord,
And a laugh is recommended
To disarm a dreary bore.

H.E.

GRIMSEL-HOSPIZ

In 1962, the well-known Hotel Grimsel-Hospiz, 6,431 feet above sea level was destroyed by fire and only the restaurant service has been maintained since. When the Grimselpass is opened to traffic this Spring, a new 50-bed hotel will be inaugurated. The hotel will be open from June to September and provide accommodation for spring and summer ski-ing enthusiasts as well as mountaineers, summer tourists, etc.

(S.N.T.O.)