

O.S.E.C. news in brief

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SWISS MAY DAY

"Labour Day" provides an opportunity for big speeches and orderly demonstrations, for flag-waving and political slogans. This year, in Switzerland, too, the style of the Radical Left has shown itself in a more militant way. In the "Tagesanzeiger", two contrasting photographs taken in Zurich gave a clear picture of the new revolutionary tendency. The first showed a very orderly group of mostly elderly men and one or two women, carrying banners "*Von der AHV zur Volkspension*" and "*Amnestie für die pol. Gefangen in Griechenland, Spanien & Portugal*". No flags, no unruly running, no anger—simply determination to demonstrate in the most disciplined way possible. Over 5,000 participated in the "quiet" demonstration on the Cathedral Square, arranged by the *Gewerkschaftskartell*. The second photograph spells disorder: bearded and long-haired young men and women, violently waving and tossing large (red) flags, running and obviously shouting their grievances. The Young Left arranged a "teach-in" (term used in Switzerland) and ranted against the Swiss Aliens Police, demanded more freedom in various fields and commented on strikes and votes for women. However high feelings may have run, there were no incidents, and police duties were confined to regulating traffic.

In Berne, over 3,000 men and women, including 200 members of the "Forum Politicum" and many foreign workers took part in a demonstration outside the Houses of Parliament. Some of the speakers declared they had nothing to do with the "Forum" whose slogans were more militant, such as "*Wo Throne wanken, helfen Schweizer Banken*". A special event was organised by the University on "Class struggle and Socialism in Switzerland".

Federal Councillor Tschudi spoke in Aarau on the Welfare Society. He demanded more planning, better old-age insurance and improved education and training facilities.

In Basle, the decision whether to have a demonstration and procession was only just carried by 46 to 45 voices at the *Gewerkschaftskartell*, the local T.U. Council's meeting. The motto was "Solidarity 1969", and the event had a decidedly international character, foreign workers, Biafrans and Czechs taking part. Some of the "Progressive Youth" tried to hoist a Vietcong flag at the *Rathaus*.

The worst incident in Switzerland happened at Moutier in the Bernese Jura where the police had to use tear gas and hoses on the fighting crowds. The Secretary-General of the "Rassemblement Jurassien", Roland Béguelin, had to be taken away earlier because political opponents tried to attack him.

In Geneva, pro-Chinese (Swiss) Communists tried to disturb the official demonstration, and the police had to confiscate publicity matter.

In Lucerne, the Socialist Mayor of Berne, was severely interrupted by the "Young Left", and finally, in Winterthur, where the May Day Celebration took place in the evening at the "Hotel Volkshaus", some members of the so-called "Critical Youth" partly directed from Zurich, burned a Franco-Spanish flag.

In Chur, a brass band woke the citizens at 6 a.m., an old tradition.

(By courtesy *Agence Télégraphique Suisse* and "*Tagesanzeiger*".)

O.S.E.C. NEWS IN BRIEF

According to statistics issued by the American Telephone & Telegraph Company, 31 countries had over half a million **telephones** in service on January 1st, 1967. The United States comes first with 49.9 receivers for 100 inhabitants, followed by Sweden (47.9), New Zealand (39.8) and, fourth (Switzerland (39.2); next came West Germany (15.8), France (13.1) and Italy 12.4).

The **Bugnion group** has set up a new company in Geneva whose object is the general management and administration of firms of all kinds, particularly those affiliated to the group, both in Switzerland and abroad. This company will be responsible for the co-ordination of the policies followed in regard to industrial property by the multinational firms involved and of all economic problems connected with the use of patents.

The two big Basle chemical firms of Ciba and Geigy have announced their decision to set up a **Research Institute of Medical Biochemistry**. This new research centre will be known as the "Friedrich Miescher Institute" in honour of the Basle physiologist who

discovered nucleic acids a hundred years ago, thus laying the foundations of modern molecular biology.

A betatron manufactured by **Brown, Boveri & Co.**, with a capacity of 45 million electron volts, is at present being installed in the Clinic of Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine at the Zurich Cantonal Hospital. This plant which will be the most powerful of its kind in the world used for medical purposes is scheduled to go into operation in the month of June and will be used in the fight against cancer.

At the beginning of the year, **Aluminium Suisse S.A.** signed an agreement with the Belgian Government and the Provincial Industrialisation Company in Liège, under the terms of which the Swiss firm will build an aluminium factory in the region of Amay with an initial annual output of 66,000 tons. The new plant is planned to be ready for operation by the middle of 1972.

The **Oerlikon Machine Works in Zurich** was recently awarded the order for the construction of sub-stations for the first stage of a 220 kW high tension network connecting the Colombian towns of Bogota, Medellin and Cali.

In 1968, the turnover of the **Swiss Consumer Cooperatives Union (Coop)** passed the 3 billion-franc mark. With 3,006.1 million francs compares with 2,847.3 m. francs in 1967, it showed an increase of 5.6%.

The annual report of the **Nestlé group**, which has just been sent to shareholders, shows for the first time a balance sheet and consolidated profit and loss accounts. From 1967 to 1968, the total of the balance sheet rose from 6.29 to 6.86 billion francs, while the profits of the group as a whole increased from 333 to 405 million francs.

The freeze-drying process for the preservation of foodstuffs have become more and more widely used during the last few years, the firm of **Haco Co. Ltd., at Gumligen**, has gone in for the manufacture of freeze-dried coffee and recently installed the first industrial plant of this type in Switzerland.

FOREIGN LABOUR CUTS

In the course of this year, Swiss employers will have to cut down the number of their foreign workers by 2%. The Swiss Government, for its part, will be more severe in granting dispensations. On the other hand, the number of foreign workers not affected by the measures of control will be considerably increased in order to make things easier on the labour market. In taking these steps, the Federal Council is not seeking to reduce foreign manpower in Switzerland, but to stabilise the numbers.

(O.S.E.C.)