

# Swiss news

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the little red book, which is hardly liable to change Swiss history, and this trivial attempt at tarnishing the reputation of an important public figure. The fact that they are harping on purely sensational themes indicates that they are badly in need of a cause and a more important following.

Still, however silly the affair, it has filled the "Swiss News" pages of most papers for a couple of days. Switzerland is so small that anything original makes headlines. While the Winterthur trial was going on, there was little else to read in the home-news section of most papers! Besides the odd crime, the odd stone-laying ceremony, the inaugurations of new purifying plant and factories, annual conferences, or the technical law-making of Parliament, very little happens in Switzerland, or so it seems to the outside observer! But Switzerland has a great number of newspapers with highly talented journalists who, when a titbit of new activity happens to emerge, have to seize it in order to exercise their craft, and, of course, to amplify and elaborate it to turn it into good reading material. That's the job of journalists—to transform events into something interesting by improving them. For this reason, small things can claim vast spaces in the pages of newspapers, who, after all, must be filled somehow. Even the recurring themes have to be rendered more acute to be made interesting. There's no denying that the Jura problem is serious, but journalists will never lose a chance to dramatize over it, if only by giving it special publicity in the absence of any other worthwhile problems. The problem which probably doesn't get any undue publicity is that of foreign workers, who, with their families, number 930,000, seven times the population of the Jura and perhaps twenty times the Separatist population.

Mind you, the same tricks are played by British journalists. They churn up the same old stale subjects, affix them with headlines, for want of any better news. Thus we get an editorial in the "Times" commenting every monthly trade figures, we spend thrilling evenings in front of the "tele" on Budget-day (to learn, in the wee hours, that beer has gone up by twopence a pint) and we listen with unbelievable interest to eternal party-political squabbles. Television and a mammoth Press contrive to keep us always interested in the news, unimportant or not. This, of course is not a bad thing as such, but it does tend to absorb much of the spare time of modern man, who spends too much of it in getting informed on dispensable facts. The danger is smaller in Switzerland, where fewer things actually happen. A Swiss newspaper therefore has more space devoted to outside news than a British national paper. Having journeyed through the history of Switzerland in the smaller classes, Swiss children learn German or French

history at school. It is not that our history is rapidly exhausted, it is necessarily too "local" (and therefore too specialized) to have any bearing on the present state of the world, and for that matter, to be particularly exciting. The larger the country and the greater its power, the more its problems can be felt to have authentic importance and interest. The Swiss must therefore feed on the little problems expounded for them in their newspapers and on the problems of others. Sometimes, a spangle that resembles a gem, like the little red book, the Florida affair or the alleged antisemitism of a politician is thrown in the humdrum of everyday politicking, and one feels that "rattling good history" is going on at home!

(PMB)

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## SWISS NEWS

### RECENT DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND

Karl Alfons Meyer, 86, as a result of a long and painful illness, in Kilchberd. A specialist in forestry and a man of letters, Mr. Meyer contributed to this science and wrote a number of literary works devoted to the history of trees and forests. These achievements earned him a doctorate h.c. from the Polytechnikum of Zurich, the honorary membership of the Swiss Association of Forestry and the literary prize of the city of Zurich.

Mr. Albert-Louis Dentan, 73, in Geneva. A civil engineer formed at the Epul in Lausanne, Mr. Dentan began his career in France. He returned to Geneva some forty years ago and founded a well known consultancy office. He taught at Geneva's technikum and was a well known political figure. He represented the liberal party at the Municipal Council and sat on the board of the town's industrial services.

Mr. Hermann G. Stokar, 79, founder and owner of a firm of business and insurance consultants. He came from Schaffhausen and was a founding member of the association for free enterprise. He edited the "Wirtschaft Winke".

Mr. William Herren, 81. For 40 years he sat on the communal council of Cologny, Geneva, and was mayor of this locality for 12 years. His past functions included the presidency of the "International Life-saving Society of the Léman".

The opera singer Bruno Manazza, 57. He learned his art at the Zurich conservatory and started on his career as a tenor at the municipal theatre of

St. Gall. He worked subsequently for Beromunster Radio, and later at Berne, Basle, Biel and Lucerne. In 1946, he fulfilled contracts in Munich, Dusseldorf and Mannheim. He was a good friend of the composer Frank Martin.

Monsieur Sonderegger, former ambassador, 71, at Frauenfeld. He entered in the Political Department in 1928 and was sent to India in 1929. He remained there up to 1956, being Consul in Bombay up to 1943 and General Consul from then on. He played an important rôle in strengthening the commercial relations of India and Switzerland. He was ambassador to Indonesia, and then to Denmark before retiring in 1962.

Dr. Henry Larsen, a well known naturalist and taxidermist, 79, in Geneva. Born in Aarhus, Denmark, Henry Larsen studied in the United States and Germany, took part in numerous arctic expeditions before settling down in Geneva, where he directed the natural history museum. He is also known for his expeditions to Latin America with his wife May, and for numerous travel accounts.

Col. Roger Vodoz, 68, former commander of the recruit schools of Geneva and Lausanne. As a military instructor for the infantry, he has worked in numerous military training establishments. He was promoted colonel during the war and commanded the 67th Regiment (Franches Montagnes). From 1945 to 1951 he was in charge of the infantry recruit schools of the 1st Division, thus forming more than 13,000 recruits. From 1952, he worked for the Military Department as head of section for instruction, as personnel manager of the Department and as interim head of the Swiss delegation to the neutral supervisory commission in Korea.

Mr. Karl Wick, 79, a former conservative national councillor and editor of the review "Vaterland".

Mr. Jean Hotz, 79, a former plenipotentiary Minister and head of the Federal Commercial Division, in Morges. Son of a peasant of Naenikon (Zh) who eventually became prefect, Jean Hotz did an apprenticeship in banking before studying at University, which he left with a doctorate in economics. In 1922, he was called by M. Wetter, the future federal councillor, to the secretaryship of the commercial division of the Department of Public Economy (Swiss Board of Trade). He devoted his whole career to this division, heading it from 1935 to 1955. He worked under four federal councillors: Messrs Schulthess, Obrecht, Stämpfli and Rubattel, but was himself the one-time "boss" of Mr. Schaffner, the future federal councillor.

Gottfried Obi, painter, 70, in Berne. He had been the pupil of Victor Surber in the 1920's and specialised in landscapes and nudes. Other painters to have died recently are Karl Aegerter, 81, in Basle; Aurèle Barraud, 66, in Geneva; Etienne Rivier, 75, at Jouxten-Mezery. Karl Aegerter studied painting in Munich, was well known for the realism of his work, and took part in the political life of Basle, sitting at the Great Council for many years. Aurèle Barraud's main preoccupation was freedom, a theme which he expressed continually in his naturalistic art. Etienne Rivier was, professionally, a civil engineer. Besides his beautiful aquarels, he is credited with the design of numerous public works in Lausanne. Another man of arts to have died recently was Marcel Strub, curator of the Arts Museum of Fribourg. He was killed in a car accident and a ceremony gathering numerous personalities from the world of art was held in his memory in Fribourg.

Doctor Suzanne Picot-Roux, 81, in Lausanne. She was the daughter of the famous Lausanne surgeon César Roux, and the widow of Dr. Léon Picot, brother of the Genevese Councillor of State, Albert Picot. She had recently made a donation of 100,000 fr. for the creation of a "Dr. Picot-Roux Prize" and another 100,000 fr. for a "Dr. César Roux Prize".

The Abbé Thevoz, 56, in Fribourg, who died suddenly after a surgical intervention. He was the parish priest of Couvet. His ministry had led him to Geneva, Murist (near Estavayer) and La Chaux-de-Fond.

(ATS)

## THE FRENCH-SPEAKING SWISS ARE MORE ASSIDUOUS NEWSPAPER-READERS

"The German-Swiss Press is too sluggish and monotonous. Papers in French-speaking Switzerland have better understood the competitive challenge of radio and television; they are set and presented both more colourfully and interestingly". This is the kind of verdict pronounced high above the roofs of Lausanne, in a spacious office with a beautiful wide view on the Alps. The man who just spoke in this way was the chief editor of the French-speaking paper with the widest circulation: Pierre Cordey, from the "Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne".

True, the main papers of Western Switzerland, with the exception of the "Journal de Genève" and the "Gazette de Lausanne", do appear livelier, sometimes more "exciting" and therefore less "serious" than most of their German-Swiss counterparts. This is especially true of the two Geneva dailies "La Suisse" and "La Tribune

de Genève", which are enlivened with plenty of red and blue colour and even more photographs. This is equally true of the "Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne", the "Tribune de Lausanne", the "Nouvelle Revue de Lausanne" and the "Feuille D'Avis de Neuchâtel". With this enumeration we have named the papers with the widest circulation. The only one among them to approach a circulation of 90,000 is the "Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne". The "Tribune" and "La Suisse" from Geneva circulate at a little above 60,000, a figure almost reached by Vaud's most important morning daily, the "Tribune de Lausanne". The "Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel" and "l'Impartial" of La Chaux-de-Fonds hardly exceed a 30,000 circulation. The other papers which can be put in the category of large and well known papers are the "Démocrate" of the Jura Bernois, the "Liberté" of Fribourg, "Le Peuple-La Sentinelle" of La Chaux-de-Fonds, the "Nouvelliste" of the Valais, the "Voix Ouvrière" in Geneva and the two internationally-known opinion papers, the "Gazette de Lausanne" and the "Journal de Genève".

According to the association for market research, 75.3% of the French-speaking population of Switzerland read the daily press regularly, 11.3% fairly often, 9.4% rarely and 2.6% never. This shows that Western Switzerland has more enthusiastic newspaper-readers. In the German-speaking parts, 60% of people read the Press regularly, 13.9% fairly often and 16.1% rarely. 31.5% of the French-speakers view newscasts on television regularly, 52% do so on the radio and 5.4% go regularly to the news theatres.

Therefore, in spite of the fact that their papers cost more, the *Romands* read them more regularly and in greater numbers than the German-Swiss. The initiative of a French group, the Floirat group, deserves to be mentioned in this respect. The group had planned to circulate a free paper throughout French-speaking Switzerland in order to spur the demands in publicity. Although the project has recently been abandoned, "Press Forum", the Editors, said that: "We ought not to feel too safe. This plan could well be brought back to life again, if not by Floirat, then by somebody else. We must therefore remain on our guards". In the meanwhile, the "Illustré" has been modernised and made cheaper. Yearly subscription only costs 8 francs, which puts it almost at par with the Floirat paper.

The upshot of competition is felt more strongly in the French-Swiss Press than in the German-Swiss one. There has recently been, especially in the cantons of Fribourg, Valais and Neuchâtel, a spate of closures or forced mergers which has struck the smaller or medium papers. This has led to the existence of just one im-

portant paper representing official opinion in Fribourg and the Valais. The "Tribune de Lausanne" now exercises an increasing counterweight in the two cantons. Because it devotes a special page to each French-speaking canton except Geneva, it has been in increasing demand. The competition of the French Press should also not be neglected: "France Soir", "Le Monde", "Le Figaro" and "Le Dauphiné Libéré" sell about 25,000 copies daily between Geneva and Délémont.

The French Press not only presents economic dangers. The Press in general is nowadays not only a means of information, it also serves as a kind of guide. This is particularly true today, when, due to an atmosphere of generalised crisis and tentative behaviour, the Press has the important task of interpreting life and expressing the standards of society. The consequence of this setup is simple: the French-speaking population of Switzerland is being increasingly marked by French influence, ingrained with French pattern of values, tradition and standards. The daily papers do not bear so much responsibility in this development as the French illustrated periodicals, women's magazines, trash-papers such as "France Dimanche" and "Ici Paris" which all flow into Switzerland by the tens of thousands. Unfortunately, the Swiss Press can only counterbalance a fraction of this French influence, which television and radio contrive to make even stronger.

(Weltwoche)

## PERMISSIVENESS IN THE GYMNASIUM

The parents of a girl and a boy in a top form of a gymnasium in St. Gallen received a letter from the director kindly asking them to withdraw their children from the school because they had been having intimate relations. This was considered harmful to the moral climate of the school. The parents of the boy complied, but those of the girl protested and circulated a tract in which one could read, among other things: "We are shocked by the puritanical methods of the school, by the authoritarian nosing into private lives of two persons who are practically adults". The tract called for a teach-in to confront the authorities of the school and parents on this matter.

Due to the undesired publicity caused by the circulation of the tract, the school had to defend itself in a communiqué, in which it was claimed that "the task of the school is to make sure that schoolgirls don't become the sexual prey of schoolboys, that schoolboys don't fall as victims of the sexual instincts of schoolgirls. We know that intimate relations in the higher classes weren't started yesterday. But we have never met with a case so cloaked with deceit and moral inconsistency.

We feel that it is indispensable to protect youth from such examples. We ask of you, dear parents, to cooperate with us in our endeavour to maintain an atmosphere which can be considered as morally sane in the school".

The director refused to have a teach-in. The authors of the tract were punished legally.

(ATS)

### GOOD PROSPECTS FOR THE FEDERAL RAILWAYS

According to an article by Mr. R. Kalt, one of the managers of the Swiss Federal Railways, the railways will remain competitive if the Federal Council, Parliament, and, inevitably the Swiss people give them the necessary assistance. This assistance should not just be limited to hefty subsidies and protectionist measures: it was necessary to innovate in the global conception of traffic.

The author points out that productivity had constantly been on the rise, especially in transit traffic, and a railway employee was producing today 140% more than in 1938. In that year, the income of the railways had been 384 millions francs. Twenty years later it was to be 1.62 billion, a fourfold increase.

Passenger traffic had increased in the 60's at the same rate as the increase in population, the inflow of foreigners included. It represented 20 to 25% of total passenger traffic in Switzerland.

Road traffic had, on the other hand, increased much faster. In 1950, there was one car for 31 inhabitants. Last year, there was one for 5 inhabitants. Goods traffic had made speedier progress in the railways and had kept abreast of economical expansion. 50 to 55% of all goods transportation was carried out by the railways.

Future developments will include fixed timetables with departures taking place at regular intervals, in the same way as urban public transport. The length of journeys will be shortened and there will be more inter-town express trains. Comfort will be increased and a number of improvements will be accomplished in air-conditioning and sound-proofing. The Federal Railways transported 7 billion passenger-kilometres in 1960, 7.8 billion in 1968. This figure is expected to rise to 8 billion in 1980.

(ATS)

### ANTIQUES IN SWITZERLAND

A new and exciting development, whose consequences remain unknown even to the most closely concerned, has been sparked off: as though attracted by a magnet, a growing number of auction firms and art dealers are laying a bridgehead in Switzerland. It began hardly two years ago, when Christie's, the London auction house, tried to set foot in Zurich. The attempt smashed against a withheld working permit. Geneva proved more liberal and Christie's was able to open its

Geneva subsidiary in 1967 under the management of Dr. Geza von Habsburg, an art historian from the university of Fribourg, and has already staged two large auctions (with sales of precious china and the jewels of Nina Dyer) which have provoked a worldwide interest. Christie's turnover in Switzerland already amounts to 21 million francs.

The second firm to have a soft spot for the Swiss art market is Sotheby's, a few years more ancient than Christie's and with a slightly larger turnover (400 million fr. in 1968). It was officially represented in Zurich on July 1st 1969 by Dr. Jürg Wille and A. Schwarzenbach, and became known to the public in October without having announced any forthcoming auctions. The *raison d'être* of this presence in Zurich was the direct availability of Sotheby's in Switzerland, so that saleable works of art could be viewed and appreciated by experts from London.

The third foreign auction house to appear also had (like the two English firms) to associate with Swiss capital and Swiss companies. They are the "Auctiones AG" in Basle, and behind them stand the "commissaires priseurs" Messrs. Maurice and Philippe Rheims, Paris, Mr. R. G. Laurin and Mr. G. Loudmer. The capital is provided to the amount of 69% by the French baron Edmond de Rothschild, who lives in Pregny (off Geneva), 10% by Louis Chollet in Fribourg and 21% by Basler Münzen und Medaillen

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AG. This last firm has set the condition that the newly formed society shall not sell antique paintings, medals and coins at auction. The president is Dr. Christoph Bernoulli (Basle), the manager, the art historian and dealer Dr. George Segal (Basle). The first auction of Auctiones AG will be held on 24th January and probably deal with 19th and 20th century drawings. Although the president of the "Associated Art Dealers of Switzerland" was strongly opposed to the granting of a working permit to the French (because, among other points, they offer no compensatory rights and do not let the Swiss organise auctions in Paris) this was granted to them and the society was founded in September.

Many reasons are given for this rush on the Swiss art market. "Activation of the Swiss art market" is considered an important point for Sotheby's and Auctiones. For Christie's, it is the absence of high purchase tax and import duties on luxury articles which counts. Auctiones AG is also eager to get into closer contact with the German clientèle. But what ought to be decisive neither said out loud: in the face of a dwindling store of high quality art objects, there are a great number of works of art in Swiss private collections and in numbered safes; the easy Swiss currency-regulations could moreover be instrumental in helping all the "hot" money present in Switzerland to find an outlet in works of art.

(Weltwoche)

### PARIS TO BASLE ON FOOT

A film in colour called "Paris-Basle on foot" has had its première in a Zurich cinema. The film was realised by Arnold Kuebler, who also figures in it. The mayor of Zurich, Dr. S. Widmer, congratulated the author-and-actor of the film, saying that he was a herald of Zurich's cultural life. Arnold Kuebler, who has already received the literary prize of the town, is best known for his editorship of the periodical "Du". He is also well known as "chansonnier" and cartoonist. The film "Paris-Basle on foot" could not be achieved without the help of the film producer Georges Schellenbaum and Swiss Television. Both Zurich and the Confederation had also given some financial aid.

(ATS)

### THE FIRST SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SWITZERLAND

A Serbian Orthodox priest has been ordained in Berne: the first time such a thing has happened. The ceremony was conducted by Bishop L. Trifunic, head of the Serbian Orthodox diocese for Europe and Australia (whose headquarters are in London). The three main churches of Switzerland (Protestant, Catholic and Christian-Catholic) were each well represented.

This ordination coincided with the foundation-ceremony of the first Serbian Orthodox parish church of Switzerland, to be taken in charge by the new priest, Drasko Todovoric, from Belgrade.

Among the religious personalities who attended the ceremony were Monseigneur Charrière, bishop of the Catholic diocese of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg; Bishop Urs Kuery, head of the Christian Catholic Church of Switzerland, and the Rev. Lavanchy, president of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches.

The three churches contributed financially to the creation of this new Serbian Orthodox Church. It will minister to the 7,000 Yugoslavs who work in Switzerland. For political reasons, they are unwilling to worship in Russian Orthodox churches. (ATS)

### OBJECTIVITY AND TV

The Federal Council has had to give a written reply to a question by a conservative national councillor from Lucerne, Mr. Kurmann. He had been shocked by two programmes on German-Swiss television, the first one devoted to the Frauenknecht and Buehrle affairs, the second to the elections in Germany. His complaint was that the first of the programmes purported to show the existence of a close connection between the spying activities of Alfred Frauenknecht and the illegal arms deal of the Buehrle company, a comparison damaging to the name of Switzerland and the credit of Sulzer. (Frauenknecht was the Sulzer engineer who sold the "Mirage" blueprints to Israel for 800,000 francs). Regarding the programme on German elections, Mr. Kurmann had been shocked to see the topic commented by three journalists, from the "Weltwoche", men not necessarily versed in the matter they were discussing.

In reply, the Federal Council just recalled the conditions under which the Swiss Authority for Radio and Television may operate: programmes should present information which is as wide, as rapid and unbiased as possible. The television programmers had explained that, owing to the shortness of the incriminating programme, the nuances between the Buehrle and Frauenknecht affairs could not be shown as clearly as otherwise. On the programme on Germany, the Federal Council maintained that the imperatives of objectivity had been honoured. (ATS)

### PROGRESSION OF THE "SALVAGNIN" WINE

The Cantonal Wine Commission of Vaud has, in the course of eight tasting-sessions, granted the "Salvagnin" mark of guaranteed vintage to 97 lots totalling 1,620,570 litres of wine. This represents 60% of the 1968 Pinot and Gamay wine-harvest. The right to be called a "Salvagnin"

is only given to wines which have won at least 17 points out of 20 in the tasting examination. The Commission has ascertained that the volume of red wine submitted to the "Salvagnin" appellation-test was increasing from year to year. There were two reasons for this. The first was that wine consumers were getting interested in a system of guarantee, the second was that the progress in wine-growing and vinification had helped to better the quality of wine. The "Salvagnin" harvest of 1969 was already estimated to be more imposing than that of the previous year. The total volume of last year's Vaud vintage was 3.4 million litres. (ATS)

### NO SPEED LIMIT OUTSIDE URBAN AREAS

A recent federal report drafted by a commission of experts to find ways and means of limiting the number of road accidents contained 94 recommendations and over 200 pages. It abandons the idea of fixing a speed limit on open roads, on the other hand, it recommends more local speed limits on dangerous spots. The recommended speeds on motorway panels should be maintained. The report considers speed limits for new drivers as undesirable. The minimum age for passing the driving license should not be changed. The highway code ought to be taught compulsorily at school. Learners ought to have access to special practice-tracks. The report urges the use of a common psychological aptitude-test for the use of all candidates for the driving license. The most direct way of reducing the number of accidents would be in improving the quality of drivers through counsel and education, but it is also the longest. For these reasons, measures which might appear as secondary, such as technical improvements in roads and vehicles, should not be neglected. (ATS)

### A NEW PORT AT ESTAVAYER

The yachting club of Estavayer had been struggling for years to have a small pleasure port built off the town. A first attempt to build a 123-berth port was rejected by the town in 1965. The present scheme involves a 350 m jetty parallel to the main road, 6,000 square metres for light boats, a crane and a club house. The town had opposed it, fearing that it would worsen traffic congestion, which is already bad enough on the waterfront during summer days, and that the chalets located along the shoreline would have to be demolished. The yacht-club has given assurance that this would not be the case, and that it would provide for its own parking space. They have at last got the go-ahead, but the estimates for the works have risen by 140,000 francs during the time local authorities were making up their minds. (ATS)