

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1970)

Heft: 1591

Rubrik: OSEC news

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Recent Swissair Developments

It is not unduly chauvinistic to say that our national flag carrier treats its clientèle as generously, or more, than any other airline. As an example, we can mention the two highly attractive schemes introduced by Swissair for the last off-season period, which lasted from November 1st to April 1st, and which will doubtless be repeated again.

The treat is offered to non-Swiss residents who travel into Switzerland from outside Europe. One possibility is to enjoy a "Helvetic Hideaway". This prospect, ideal for the businessman who, travelling with his wife, can include some relaxation with work, offers him a dinner, overnight accommodation and breakfast at a country inn, a self-drive car for two days with 300 km free of charge or a first class return (rail) ticket which he can use on one of 11 itineraries to the country inn of his choice. These country inns are situated in eight Swiss regions, from all of which he can choose, and seven regions bordering Switzerland. These are Savoy, Burgundy, the Black Forest, the Vorarlberg, the Austrian Tyrol, South Tyrol and the Italian lakes. This wonderful scheme only costs a basic £6.12.0 and must certainly be a strong incentive for a businessman from outside Europe to fly to Switzerland by means of Swissair.

The second treat is equally attractive and entirely free. It consists in receiving a voucher at the travel agency (outside Europe) where the air ticket is bought and exchanging it at Geneva airport for a cheque-book offering 20 gorgeous attractions. The scheme is called "Geneva and Lausanne in the bag" and was rightly considered by Swissair to be the hit of the 1969-70 off-season. Among the free pleasures offered are an unlimited trip on Geneva Transport, a typical Swiss fondue meal, free admission to a fashionable nightclub, and a "free AVIS self-drive car to your good luck coupon for a high-prize lottery." Swissair certainly understands the Americans.

The company has announced favourable financial results for 1969. Net profit for the year amounted to £3.1 million compared with £2.6 million in 1968. Total revenue advanced by £18 million to £103.6 million. Operating costs went up by £12.5 million to £84.9 million, leaving an operating surplus of £18.7 million. Of this surplus, £15.6 million are to be appropriated to depreciation, compared with £10.7 million in 1968.

Including the profit balance brought forward from 1968, £3.24 million are at the disposal of the Annual General Meeting which will be held in Zurich on April 24th. After appropriating a little less than a million to statutory reserves and staff welfare institutions, the Directors have recommended the distribution of a dividend of 30 Sw. Fr. per share, compared with

28 fr. per share for 1968. A dividend of 22.50 fr. per share has been proposed on the shares issued in 1969.

The U.S. Export-Import Bank and the manufacturers have granted Swissair a £33 million credit, repayable ten years after deliveries, for the six DC-10-30 high capacity and extended range jets which Swissair has placed firmly on order. These planes will be put in service in 1972. Swissair has also placed two Boeing 747Bs on order.

Owing to its continuously increasing traffic of passengers and freight, Swissair has both extended and intensified its network. Starting on April 1st, there have been three more destinations in the Swissair network, namely Kinshasa and Douala in Africa, and Oslo in Europe. Switzerland's air links with Great Britain had been intensified this winter and the new flights which had then been introduced are there to stay. The airline's management considers that the lifting of the £50 allowance will boost Swiss-bound traffic. At present there are daily morning, afternoon and evening flights from London to Geneva and Zurich and the Coronoairliners now used on these routes have been converted to accommodate more passengers. There are daily flights from London to Basle and from Manchester to Zurich (via Rotterdam). There are moreover three weekly night flights to Basle, up to ten to Zurich and five to Geneva from London. To this must be added a 7-day a week air-cargo service towards London and a 4-day a week service to Manchester which is run in conjunction with BEA. Basle Airport is rapidly emerging as an important cargo-handling centre.

Switzerland is linked to Tokyo four times a week. DC-8 airliners are commonly used for this route. An important innovation of last winter was the use of mixed passenger/cargo DC-8-62F "Jet Traders" on the Tokyo and New York routes. According to the way the cabin is adjusted, these aircraft can carry 80 to 111 economy class passengers and five to seven cargo pallets. A sixth flight daily is being added between Geneva and Paris, the airline's highest frequency international route.

With the introduction of the 1970 summer timetable Swissair now serve 75 cities in 56 countries on all continents except Australia.

For a number of years, Swissair has been co-operating with two other airlines, the Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) and Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM) in the repair and overhaul of aircraft. The three airlines have many types of aircraft in common, particularly DC-8s, DC-9s and Coronados, a fact which has had a bearing on the way this agreement (or KSS agreement) has been implemented. The KSS airlines decide in common which types of

aircraft they will operate. They have recently decided to buy the DC-10 tri-jet (Extended Range version) and not the Lockheed L1011, its only competitor, which is powered by Rolls-Royce engines. Each airline has a share in the maintenance of the KSS machines. For example, Swissair has the responsibility of overhauling all the DC-9 engines of the group. KLM takes care of the DC-8 engines and SAS is in charge of airframes.

The French airline UTA will join the group at the advent of the DC-10s and Swissair will be responsible for the airframes of these new airliners within the "KSSU" group of airlines.

Swissair's official policy has always been extremely guarded towards the Concorde supersonic airliner, on which it has not placed any options. The Concorde doesn't appear to be at present a sound economic proposition. Its range and capacity are too small for Swissair's requirements and the company is not prepared to make any costly experiments. Considering that Swissair is a relatively small airline and a private company not enjoying the backing of the State, this position appears to be a very sensible one.

(PMB)

OSEC NEWS

Annual Congress of the European Organisation for Quality Control, in Lausanne

The 14th Annual Congress of the European Organisation for Quality Control will be held in Lausanne, Switzerland, from June 16th to 18th, 1970. The three keynotes of this event will be "Metrology—Quality—Data". Over twenty scientific reports will be presented, as well as some sixty independent communications. A specialised exhibition will also be held as part of the congress, from June 15th to 18th. Comprising about 120 exhibitors from Europe and the USA, it will give an overall picture of the practical solutions that have been found to problems of measurement.

(OSEC)

10th International Television Symposium, in Montreux

The 10th edition of the Montreux "Rose d'Or" will be held from April 23rd to 30th next. Twenty-seven radio and television organisations from 24 countries in Europe, America, Africa and Asia will take part in this competition, whose aim is to promote international exchanges of programmes and to encourage the creation of original works. A technical exhibition will complete the symposium.

The "Oscillating Vasculator": an end to circulatory diseases

(OSEC)

A Lausanne doctor has just perfected a new physiotherapeutical apparatus, the oscillating Vasculator. This machine combines the effects of several physical agents known for their thera-



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peutic action in diseases of the circulation. Forty prototypes are at present in operation, in Switzerland and several neighbouring countries; all the reports of specialists emphasise the effectiveness of treatment with this new machine. The action of the Vasculator is a result of the subtle combination of modifications in the pressure of the air, regular oscillations given to the whole body, heating at a distance, ultraviolet rays and the use of carbon dioxide and ozone. The combination of these different effects produces a reaction in the cardio-vascular system and the lymphatic system. The Vasculator acts therefore locally on the circulation in the lower or upper limbs by alternating positive and negative pressure. It is to a certain extent the optimum extension and perfection of the principal of the old cupping-glass. Various diseases have been treated with some success, among them arteriosclerosis, the after-effects of thrombosis and peripheral embolism, varicose veins, and oedemas. But the most spectacular results are undoubtedly the healing of varicose ulcers or ulcers of diabetic patients and the avoidance of amputation in case of gangrene. The apparatus is commanded and its functions synchronised electronically by a fixed sequence programmer. After more than five years of thorough experimentation, the Vasculator is now mass-produced by a Swiss firm.

(OSEC)

Fire-fighting: a revolutionary smoke suction apparatus

In fires, heat and smoke always cause considerable damage and hinder the work of extinction, especially in cellars. The work of a Swiss inventor will make it possible to reduce damage of this kind considerably. It is a smoke suction apparatus with a capacity of 9,000 cu.m. per hour. Several systems of aspirators already exist, but the originality of this new Swiss device lies in its power—an 8 h.p. engine—and in the use of fire-proof curtains. The suction orifice, in fact, is surrounded by an asbestos and metal panel. The panel can be applied either to a door, which it seals completely, or to a small window. It is very quickly put in place. The suction creates a flow of air in the opposite direction to that by which the firemen enter. In this way, they are able to work in a current of fresh air and under better conditions of visibility. The apparatus can stand temperatures of up to 240 degrees and can be used without it being necessary to go inside the premises on fire. Its comparatively low price is negligible in comparison with the damage it can avoid.

(OSEC)

FURTHER ASPECTS OF THE SWISS PRESS

While I was still correcting the proofs of the article on the Swiss Press which I wrote for the last issue, I phoned the Embassy to check some of my facts. As usual, the Embassy was ready with the required answers. More than that, I was given a recent book on the Swiss Press, "Das Bild der Schweizer Presse", written by Mr. Josef Jäger, Editor of the "Schweizerischen Politischen Korrespondenz" and founder of the "Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Lokal- und Regionalpresse".

As this book has a number of facts and ideas overlooked in my article of the last issue, I have thought it worth while to give an outline of its main contents.

The geopolitical structure of the Swiss Press

Mr. Jäger is well aware that the smallness of Swiss newspapers, in a world where economic viability calls for concentrated units, is a paradox. This paradox is however well explainable in historical and geographical terms. The immense majority of Swiss newspapers are designed to serve a market which ends with a valley, so that a typical local newspaper (which also has international news as well) will not be read by citizens living fifteen miles further afield, because they will be subscribing to another paper. Cantons limited to a valley, such as Zug and Glarus, have more than one paper but each of them represent another political tendency. Very few papers cross the boundaries of the cantons in which they are printed. The two most important Swiss papers, the popular "Blick" and the politically-neutral "Tages Anzeiger" are the most prominent cases. "La Suisse" also sells extensively outside the Canton of Geneva and the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" sells in the cantons bordering Zurich. A surprising 19 per cent of its circulation goes abroad. The multiplicity of Swiss papers then reflects the multiplicity of individual regions and the profusion of political parties.

No question of a National Press

Due to the fact that the Press is a most vital tool in direct democracy, it must necessarily be attuned to it. Switzerland's democracy is "direct" in that her citizens do not only delegate power in Berne, but actually take political decisions themselves. Many of these decisions have only a local bearing and the way the population of one canton feels on a particular problem will not, in most cases, affect the lives of citizens elsewhere in the country. The only means to keep such a democracy going is to keep citizens informed on the events which concern them, and to voice the will of the various sections of

the population as represented by the parties. This is why a national press on the British model would not only fail to work but be positively harmful to Switzerland. Two or three mammoth papers would indeed have to ignore the claims of minorities and could not concern themselves with local problems. The Swiss State can only continue to live peacefully on the federal system and it is important that this system, which has proved so successful in the past should be supported by the country's press.

How to keep small papers alive

Having established that small papers (with circulations falling as low as a thousand) are there to stay, it becomes important to find the way in which they can achieve this economically.

Some small papers manage to have correspondents in foreign capitals. On the technical side, many of them manage equally impressive feats. The author mentions the case of a publication circulating at just over a thousand which has four telewriter receivers and wants to acquire a fifth. Another similar publication has its own rotary press. Owing to present labour costs, newspapers must be equipped with modern time-saving equipment. Because this kind of equipment is so expensive (a rotary press for a daily with a 10,000-circulation and 16 pages costs about two million francs) it is necessary for small papers to share this equipment. They should not only share equipment, but also their editorial staff. The basic problem which must be solved is to preserve the individual character of small papers in spite of a mandatory co-operation between them. This has been made possible thanks to recent advances in printing technology.

How to modernise the manufacture of a paper

The most important piece of equipment in a newspaper composing room is the linotype, a machine with a complicated keyboard which produces lines of type in lead. These types are put together in the "make-up galley" and become the mould of the newspaper page. The correctness of the page can be checked by "pulling a proof of the galley", an operation consisting of placing a sheet of paper onto the galley and passing an inked roller across it. If the newspaper only possesses a flat press, then the corrected type will go directly onto the machine, which automatically picks up the ready-cut sheets of the newspaper and compresses them against the type (which is inked between each movement). Such machines work slowly and are wholly inadequate for large circulations. The rotary press is then